VIZ GRAPHIC NOVEL

NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND™

PERFECT COLLECTION 1

STORY AND ART BY
HAYAO MIYAZAKI

NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND™

PERFECT COLLECTION

1

STORY AND ART BY
HAYAO MIYAZAKI

This volume contains NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND volumes 1 and 2 in their entirety.

Story & Art by Hayao Miyazaki

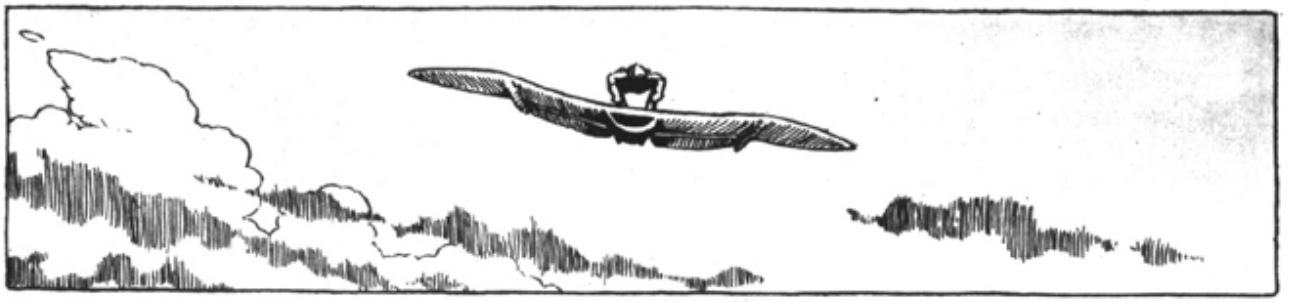
Translation/David Lewis and Toren Smith (Studio Proteus)
Lettering & Retouch/Tom Orzechowski (Studio Proteus)
Cover Design/Viz Graphics
Editor/Annette Roman
Managing Editor/Satoru Fujii
Executive Editor/Seiji Horibuchi
Publisher/Keizo Inoue

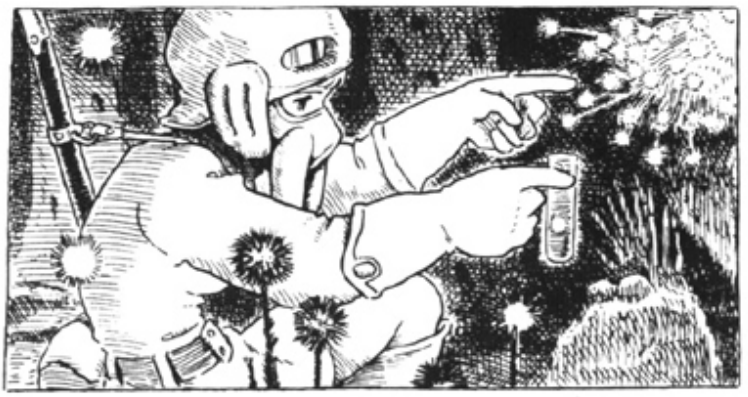
First published by Tokuma Shoten
Publishing Co., Japan
© 1995 Nibariki/Tokuma Shoten
NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND
is a trademark of Hayao Miyazaki and
Tokuma Shoten.
All rights reserved.
The stories, characters and incidents mentioned
in this publication are entirely fictional.
Printed in Canada

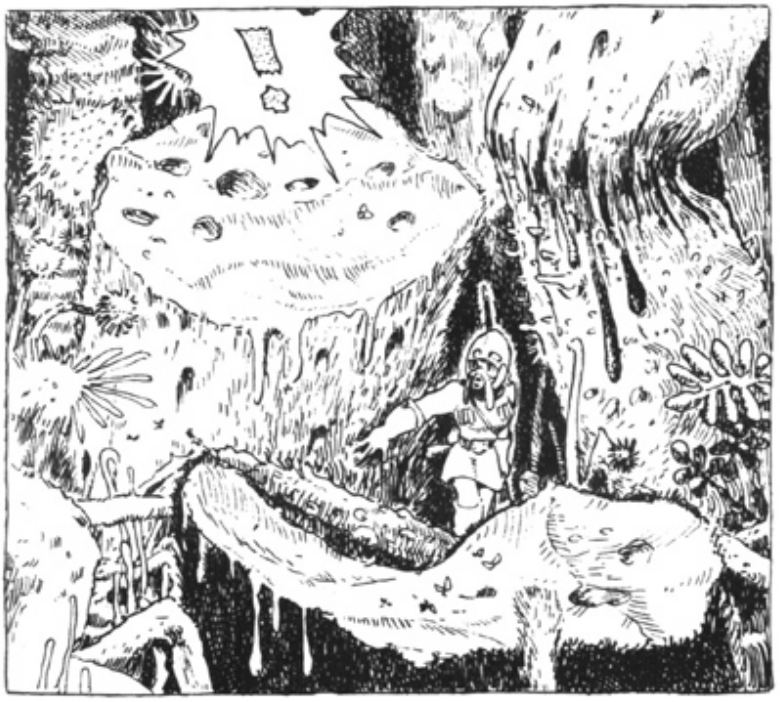
Published by Viz Communications, Inc.
P.O. Box 77010, San Francisco, CA 94107

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First printing May, 1995

Holy City of SHUWA
D LAKES
S
E
W
N
The DOROK Principalities
Advance of Kushana
PAGASE
Aerial Rendezvous Site
Torumekian Colony City of NOMISTO
SEA OF CORRUPTION
PEJITEI
Autonomous States of the PERIPHERY
Advance of the Three Princes
EFTAL DESERT
VALLEY of SAND
INLAND SEA
WAJI VALLEY
VALLEY of WIND
KUWAN
SEMO
Beginning of the PERIPHERY
EPO, The Westernmost City of Torumekia
OCEAN of SALT
Capital City of TOLAS
Kingdom of TORUMEKIA
MAP of TORUMEKIA



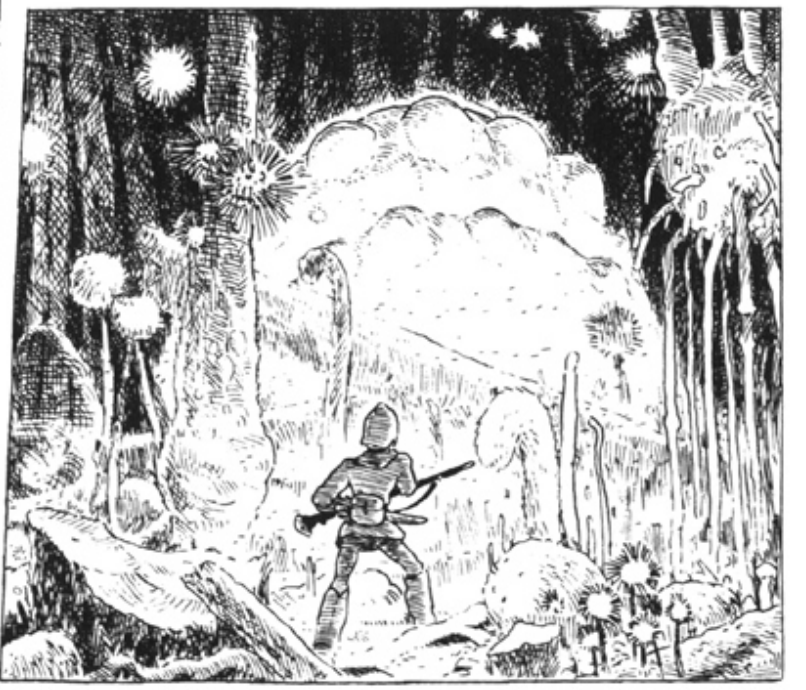




THESE ARE THE MARKS OF AN *OHMU'S* TEETH... I'M SURE OF IT.
THERE'S NEVER BEEN ONE IN THIS AREA BEFORE...

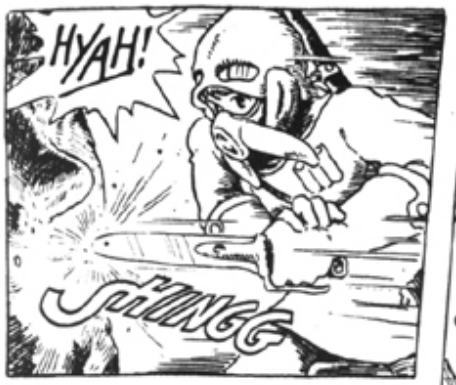
HE'S GORGING HIM-SELF...
PERHAPS HE'S JUST SHED HIS SKIN.

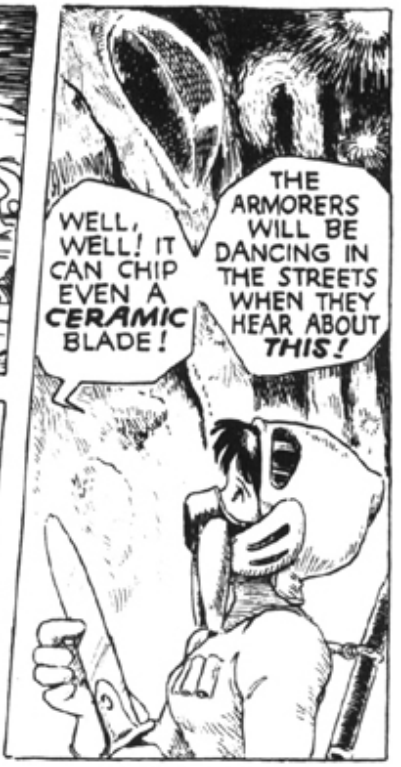
I THOUGHT SO!

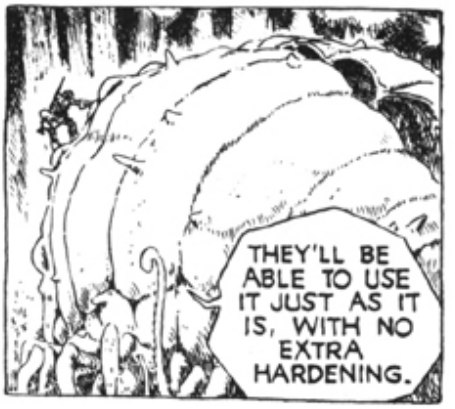


HOW BEAUTIFUL... I'VE NEVER SEEN A COMPLETE OHMU SHELL BEFORE...

IT'S STILL FRESH... HE MUST HAVE SHED IT JUST THIS MORNING.
KONGG
SOUNDS LOVELY...


HYAH!
SHING


WELL, WELL! IT CAN CHIP EVEN A CERAMIC BLADE!
THE ARMORERS WILL BE DANCING IN THE STREETS WHEN THEY HEAR ABOUT THIS!

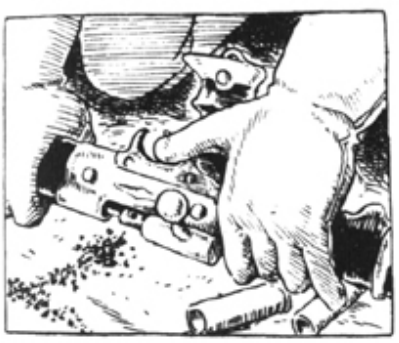

THEY'LL BE ABLE TO USE IT JUST AS IT IS, WITH NO EXTRA HARDENING.

OWWW OW!

AND THIS EYESHIELD WOULD MAKE A PERFECT GUNSHIP CANOPY!

IF I CARRY JUST ONE, I SHOULD STILL BE ABLE TO GET OFF THE GROUND...

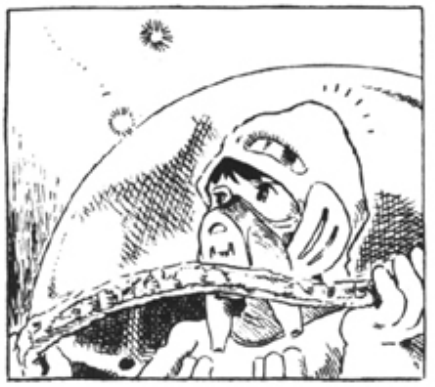
Tok
Tok

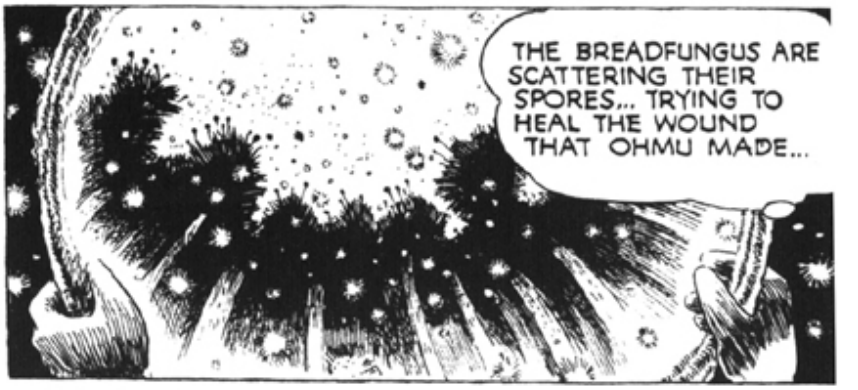


BOMF

KANG
KANG

Oh! IT'S SO LIGHT...
SO BEAUTI-FUL...




THE BREADFUNGUS ARE SCATTERING THEIR SPORES... TRYING TO HEAL THE WOUND THAT OHMU MADE...

JUST LIKE SNOW...
I WONDER WHAT SORT OF WORLD OHMU SEES THROUGH HIS FOURTEEN EYES...

TO HIM, THIS GLOOMY FOREST MUST SEEM A WARM AND COMFORTING PLACE.

BUT HUMANS CAN'T WALK HERE UNMASKED FOR EVEN FIVE MINUTES, OR OUR LUNGS WOULD DECAY. A FOREST OF DEATH...

THEY'VE STOPPED...

HE KILLED US!
!

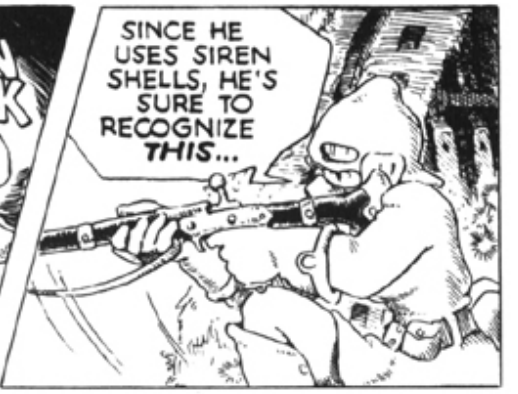
WHO ...?!

WAIT... IT'S NOT A HUMAN CRY... IT'S INSIDE MY HEAD!
KILLED US!
KILLED US!
HE KILLED US!
WE WILL KILL HIM!
KILLED US! WE WILL KILL!
HE KILLED US!
SUCH TERRIBLE SADNESS... AND VIOLENT ANGER...
KILL...
WHERE ARE YOU? CAN YOU TELL ME...
WHY ARE YOU SPREADING SUCH HATRED?
WHO ARE YOU?! WHO'S OUT THERE?!
KILL!!
AA!
IT'S GONE...
THE FOREST INSECTS MUST BE ATTACKING SOMEONE!
THFF
ANOTHER!
THAT SOUND... A SIREN SHELL!
I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING FROM DOWN HERE...

SKRASH
heeeoooouu
THERE!
ROYAL YANMAS! AND SO MANY OF THEM...!
BUT THE SPORES SHOULDN'T BE STIRRED UP LIKE THAT... LIKE SMOKE...
AAA!
OHMU!
AN OHMU'S ATTACKING SOMEONE!

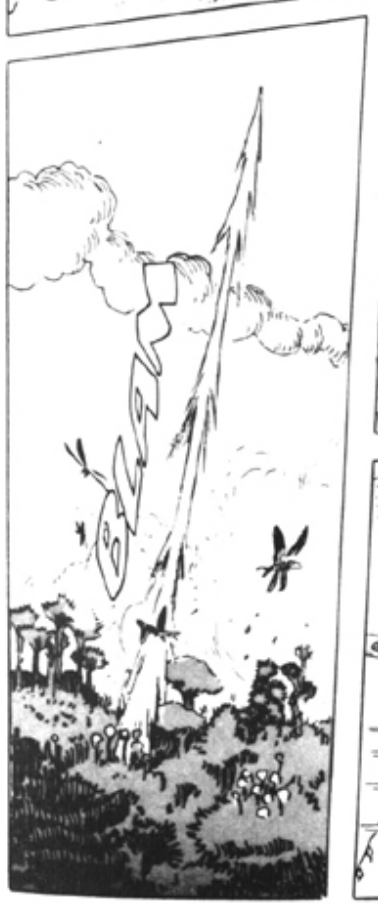
MAYBE IT'S AN ARMS MERCHANT ...
HE'LL NEVER ESCAPE THE FOREST GOING *THAT* DIRECTION...

GNK

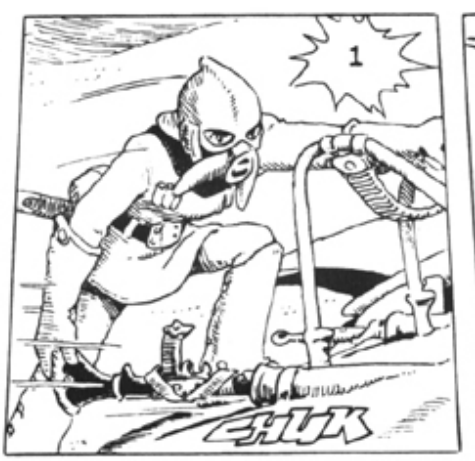

SINCE HE USES SIREN SHELLS, HE'S SURE TO RECOGNIZE *THIS*...

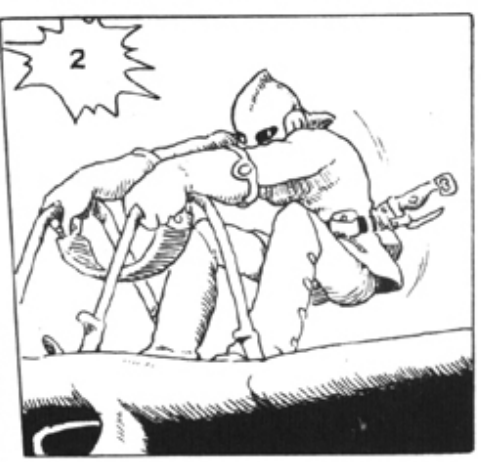
HEAR ME !!
BLAM
SHUU

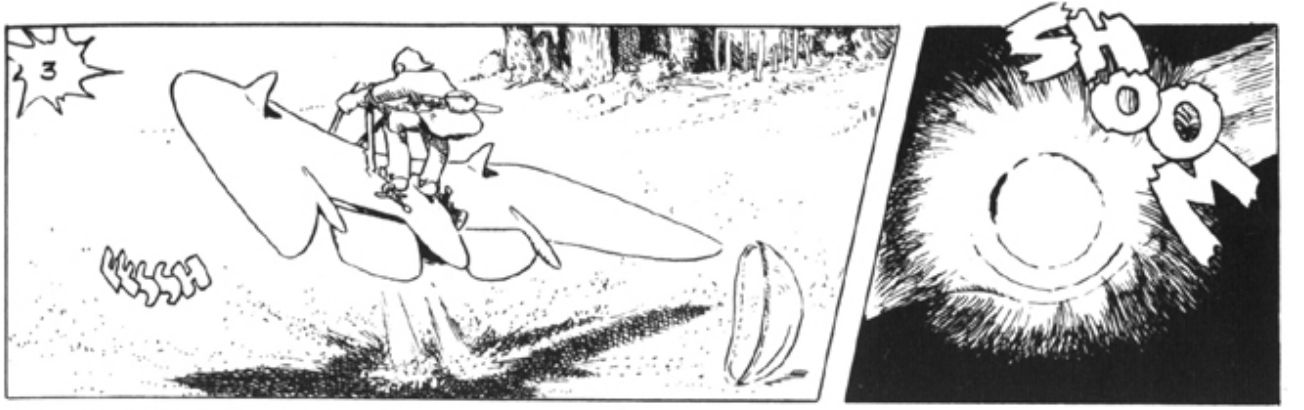
SKEEEEEEEE



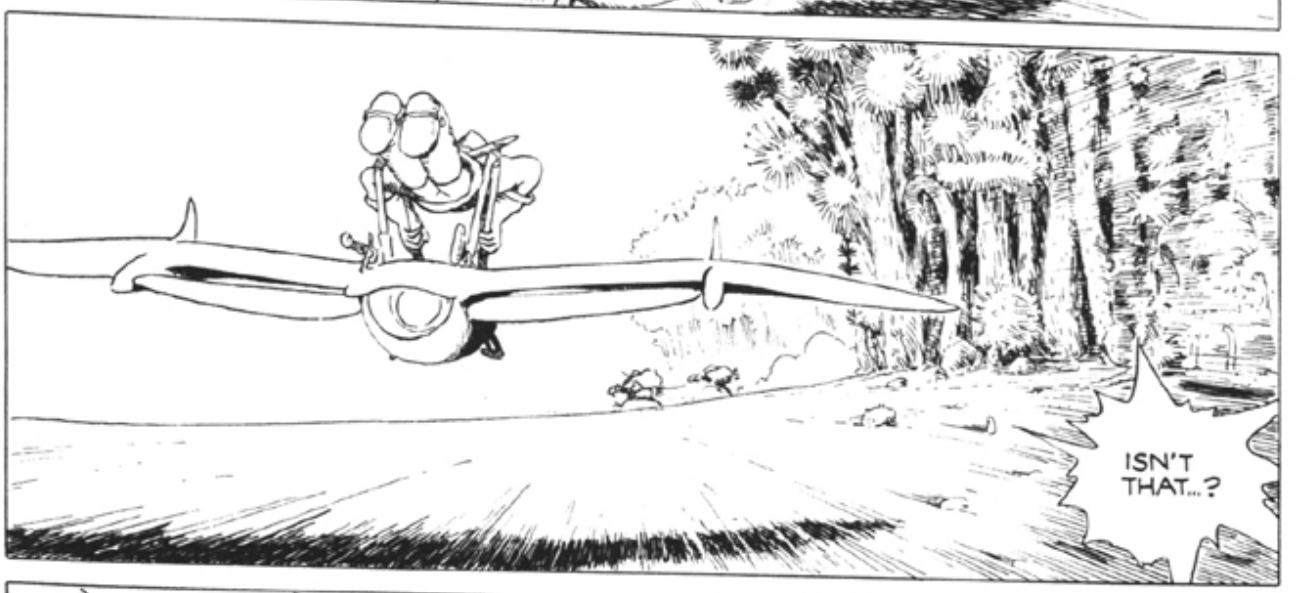
HE HEARD! HE'S COMING!

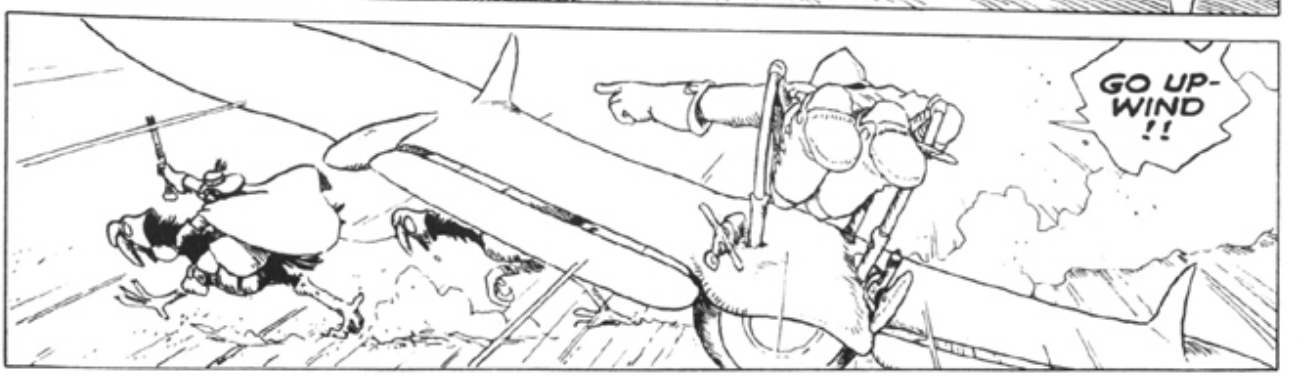

1
CHUK


2

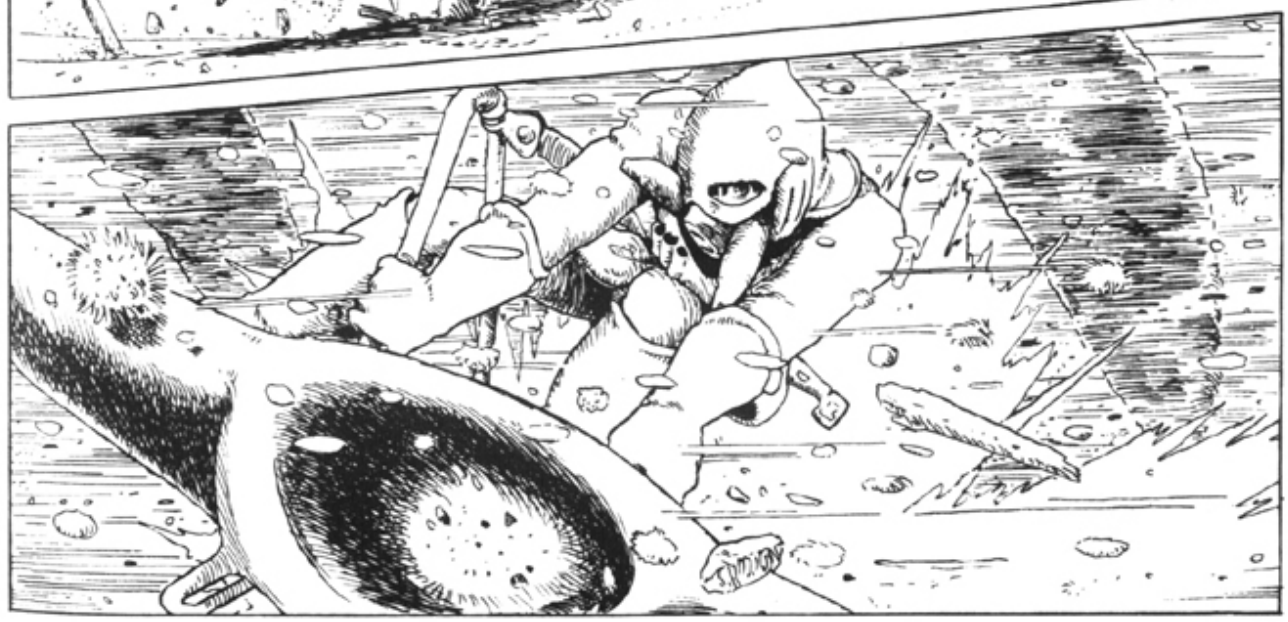

3
SHOOM

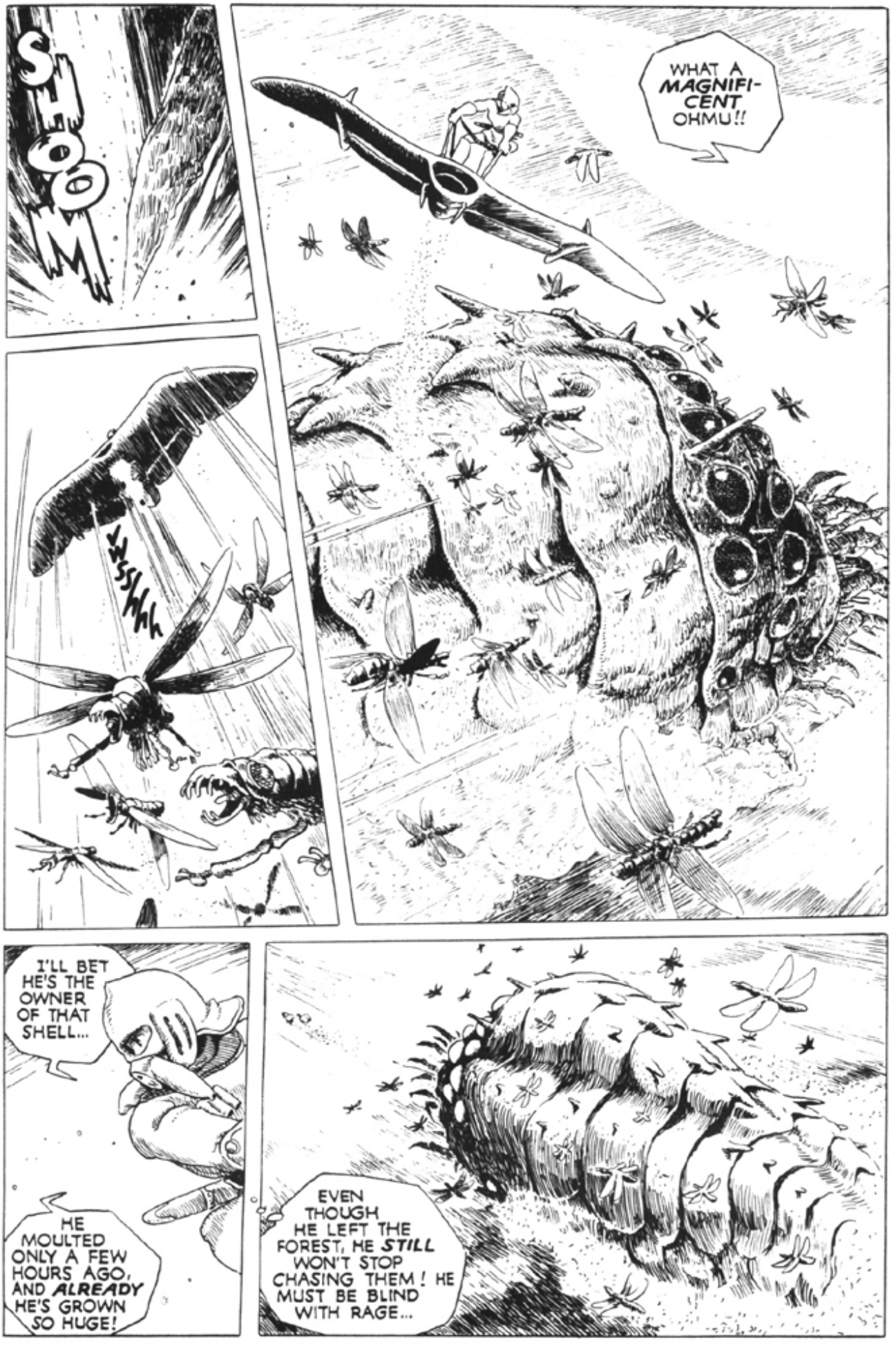
VWSSHH


ISN'T THAT...?


GO UP-WIND !!

SMASH




SHOOM
WHAT A MAGNIFICENT OHMU!!
WHSSHHH
I'LL BET HE'S THE OWNER OF THAT SHELL...
HE MOULTED ONLY A FEW HOURS AGO, AND ALREADY HE'S GROWN SO HUGE!
EVEN THOUGH HE LEFT THE FOREST, HE STILL WON'T STOP CHASING THEM! HE MUST BE BLIND WITH RAGE...

I HAVE TO CALM HIS ATTACK REFLEXES...

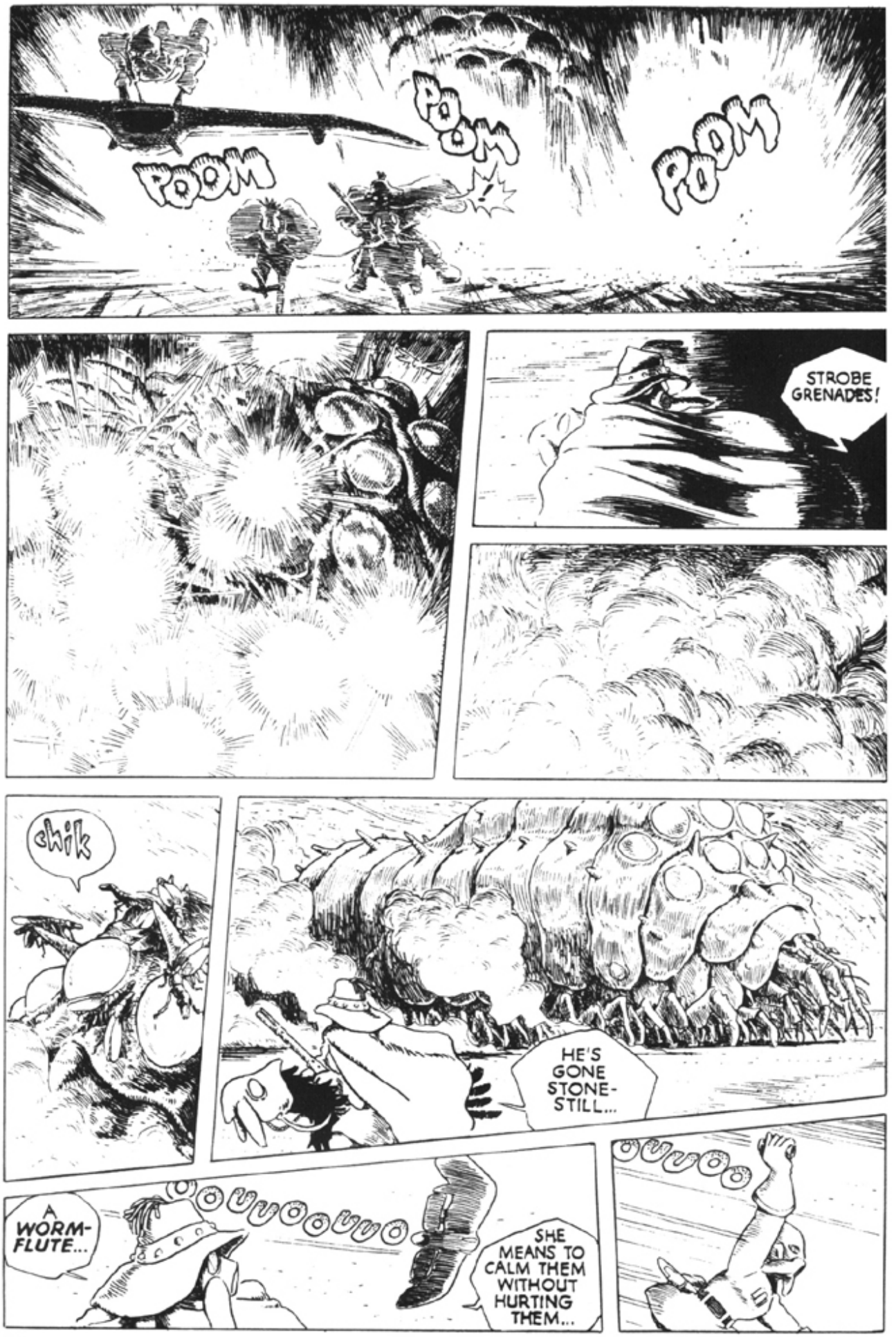
VOM

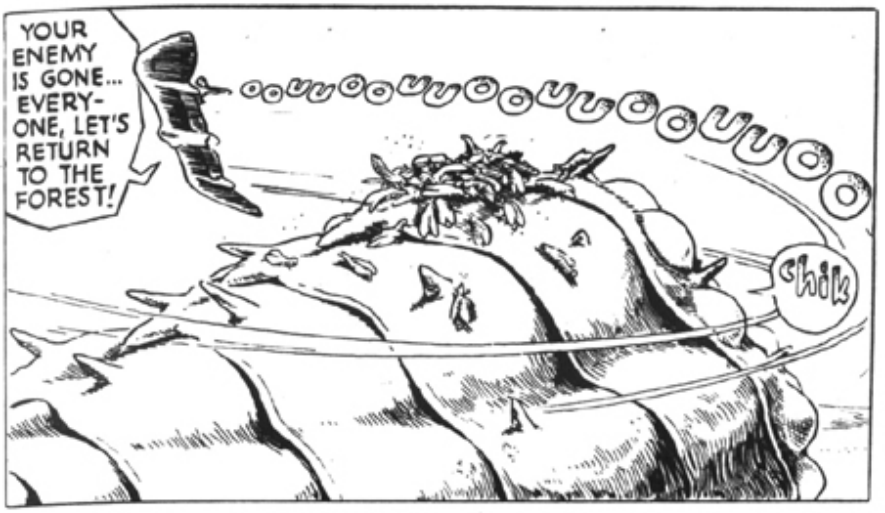
OHMU! GO BACK TO THE FOREST! THIS IS NOT YOUR WORLD OUT HERE...
WE CAN'T HAVE YOU SCATTERING ALL THOSE SPORES YOU CARRIED WITH YOU...!

HIS EYES ARE BURNING RUBY-RED WITH ANGER...
THAT CRY I HEARD... COULD IT HAVE BEEN THIS OHMU ...?

TEE-HEE.. SURELY NOT!
I'LL HAVE TO PLAY A LITTLE ROUGH, I'M AFRAID...

FASH!

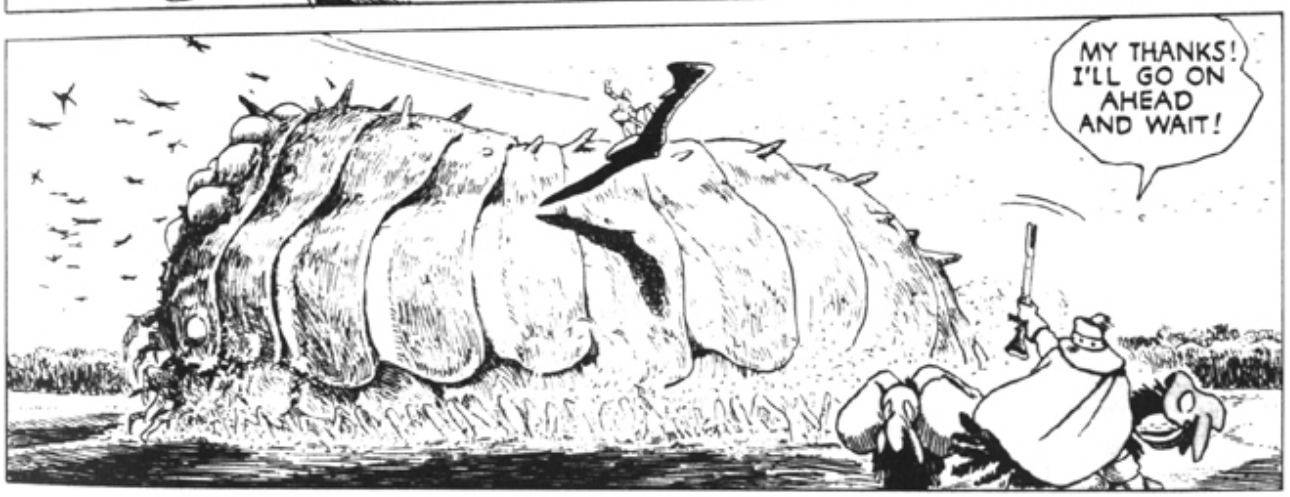

POOM
POOM
POOM
STROBE GRENADES!
chik
HE'S GONE STONE-STILL...
A WORM-FLUTE...
OUUOOUUO
SHE MEANS TO CALM THEM WITHOUT HURTING THEM...
OUUOO


YOUR ENEMY IS GONE... EVERY-ONE, LET'S RETURN TO THE FOREST!
chik

chik...
chik
chik

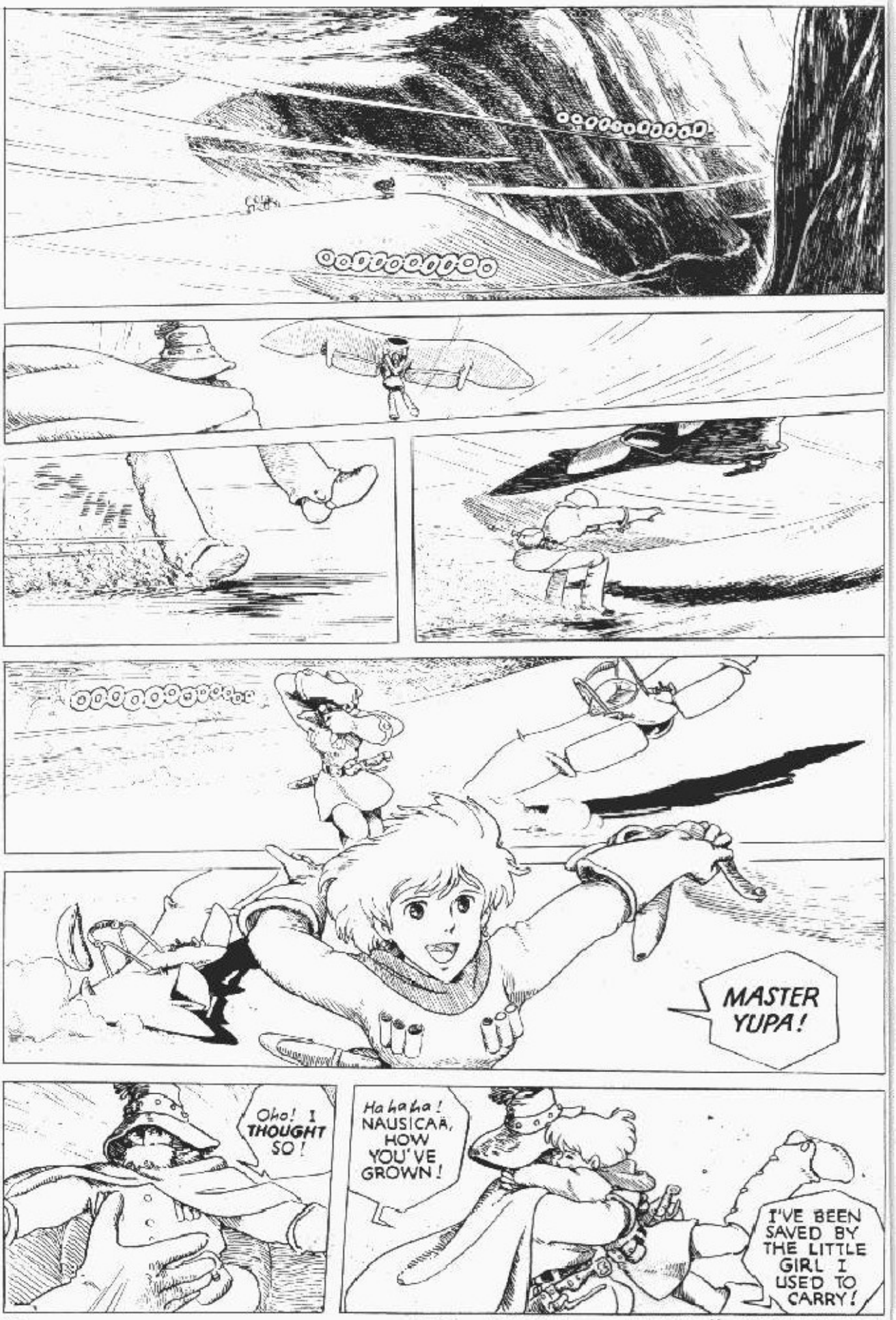
LET'S RETURN TO THE FOREST... LEAVE THIS COLD WORLD...
chik
chik...

INCREDIBLE... IT'S ALMOST AS IF SHE CAN READ THEIR MINDS...

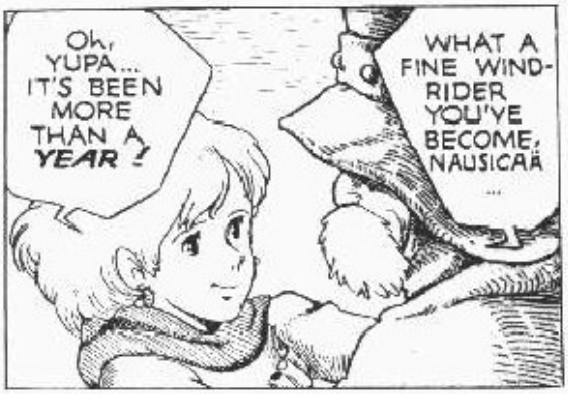

MY THANKS! I'LL GO ON AHEAD AND WAIT!

SPLASH

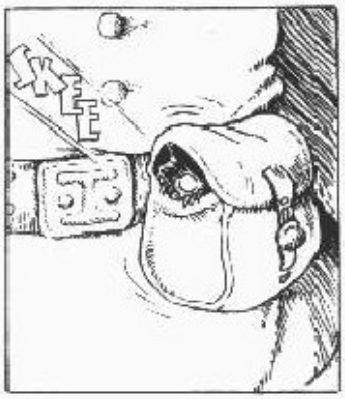
FARE-WELL, OHMU...
FORGIVE ME FOR USING THOSE STROBE GRENADES! WE'LL MAKE GOOD USE OF YOUR SHELL...



YUPA= YOU-PAH NAUSICAÄ= NOW-SEE-KAH


Oh, YUPA... IT'S BEEN MORE THAN A YEAR!
WHAT A FINE WIND-RIDER YOU'VE BECOME, NAUSICAÄ ...

NOT AT ALL! FATHER SAYS I'M STILL...
Mm?


KEE

Oh, YES... I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT YOU, LITTLE ONE. YOU'VE CAUSED ME A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE, HAVEN'T YOU?

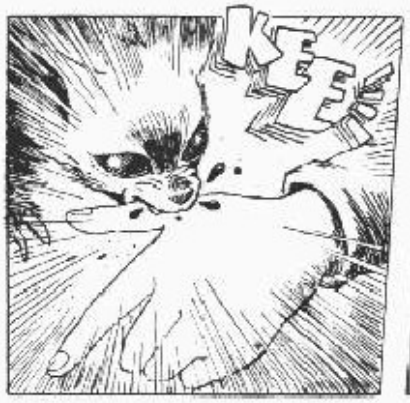
YUPA! IT'S A SQUIRREL-FOX!
I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE IT CAUGHT HIM, BUT I SAW A ROYAL YANMA CARRYING THIS RASCAL OFF. I MISTOOK HIM FOR A HUMAN BABY AND MADE THE ERROR OF USING MY GUN.
SO THAT'S WHAT ENRAGED THE OHMU INTO ATTACKING YOU...!

THE LITTLE DEVIL HAD PASSED OUT, SO HE DIDN'T INHALE ANY OF THE FOREST POISONS.
HERE, HERE...

COME ON...
HSSS

NOW, NOW!
YOU SHOULDN'T PUT OUT YOUR HAND LIKE THAT... HE'S STILL WILD!

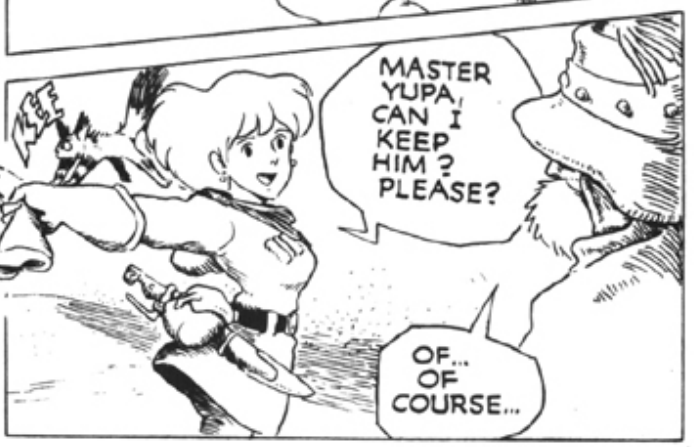
HSSS
IT'S ALL RIGHT... DON'T BE AFRAID...

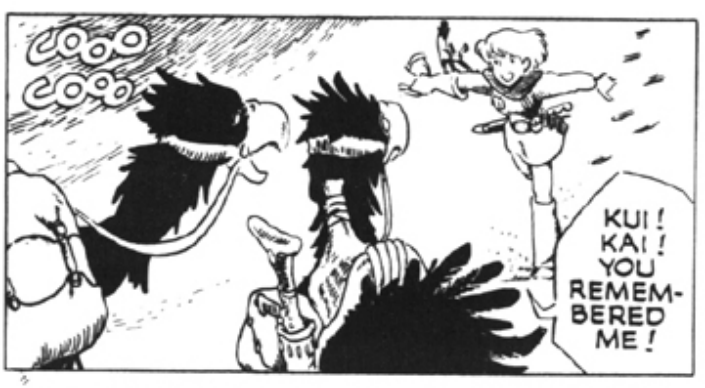

KEE

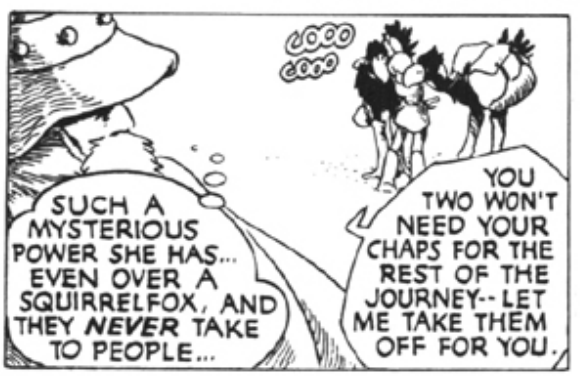
SEE... DON'T BE AFRAID.

YOU WERE FRIGHTENED, WEREN'T YOU? BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.

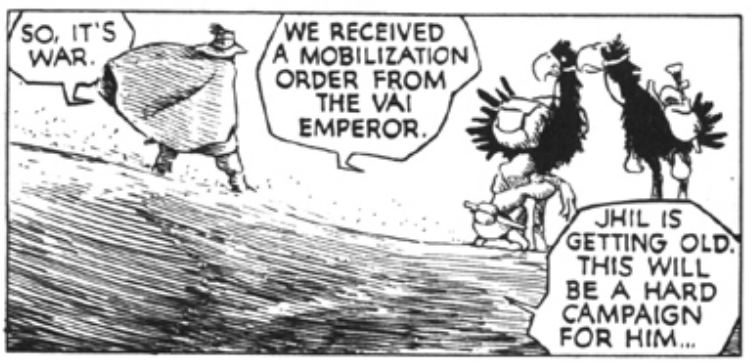
SEE ?


MASTER YUPA, CAN I KEEP HIM ? PLEASE?
OF... OF COURSE...


KUI ! KAI ! YOU REMEM-BERED ME !

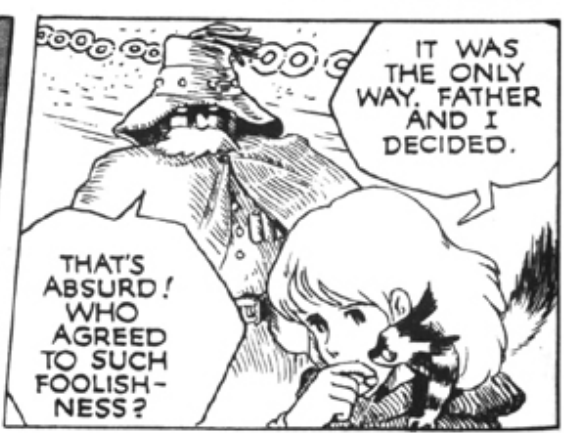

SUCH A MYSTERIOUS POWER SHE HAS... EVEN OVER A SQUIRRELFOX, AND THEY *NEVER* TAKE TO PEOPLE...
YOU TWO WON'T NEED YOUR CHAPS FOR THE REST OF THE JOURNEY-- LET ME TAKE THEM OFF FOR YOU.

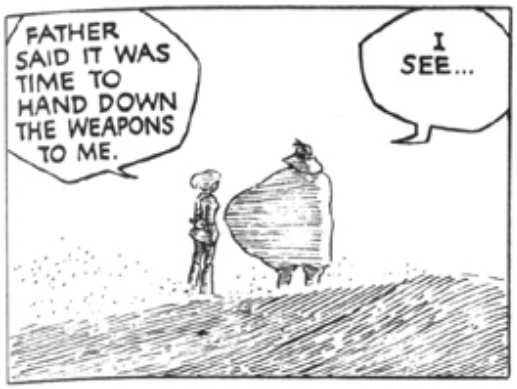
I'M SO GLAD YOU GOT HERE TODAY! WE COULD LEAVE FOR THE FRONT AS EARLY AS TOMORROW ...

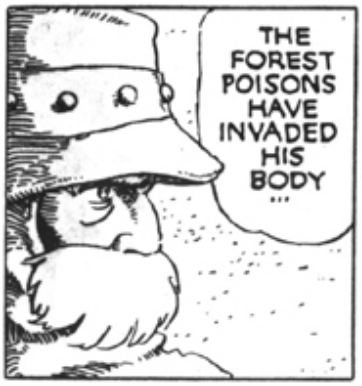

SO, IT'S WAR.
WE RECEIVED A MOBILIZATION ORDER FROM THE VAI EMPEROR.
JHIL IS GETTING OLD. THIS WILL BE A HARD CAMPAIGN FOR HIM...

FATHER ISN'T GOING. I AM.

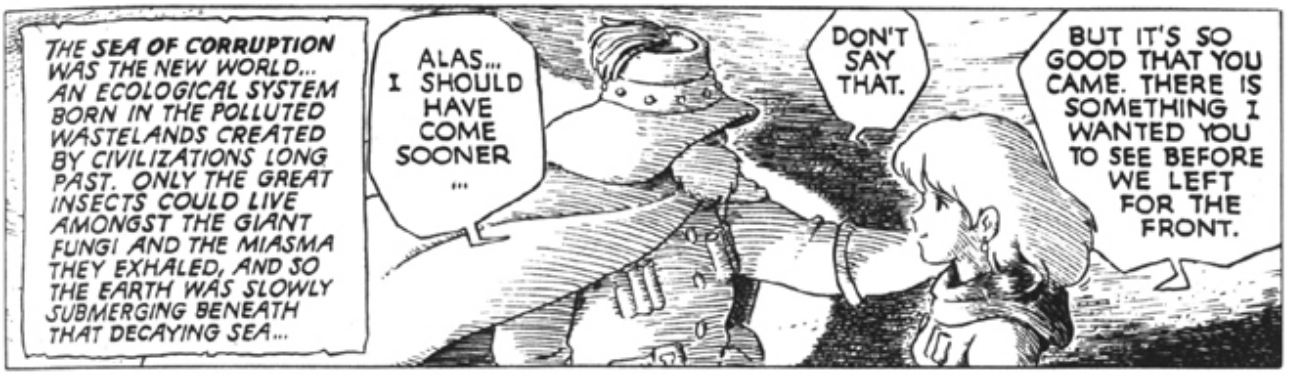
NAUSICAÄ... TO *WAR*?!


IT WAS THE ONLY WAY. FATHER AND I DECIDED.
THAT'S ABSURD! WHO AGREED TO SUCH FOOLISH-NESS?


FATHER SAID IT WAS TIME TO HAND DOWN THE WEAPONS TO ME.
I SEE...


THE FOREST POISONS HAVE INVADED HIS BODY ...

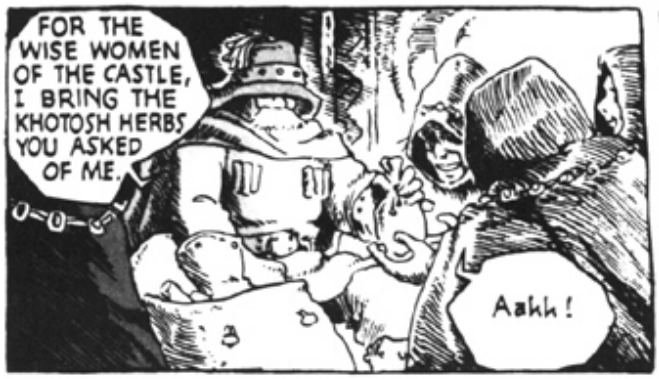
YES. WE LIVE BESIDE THE SEA OF CORRUPTION, SO IT IS OUR DESTINY...


THE SEA OF CORRUPTION WAS THE NEW WORLD... AN ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM BORN IN THE POLLUTED WASTELANDS CREATED BY CIVILIZATIONS LONG PAST. ONLY THE GREAT INSECTS COULD LIVE AMONGST THE GIANT FUNGI AND THE MIASMA THEY EXHALED, AND SO THE EARTH WAS SLOWLY SUBMERGING BENEATH THAT DECAYING SEA...
ALAS... I SHOULD HAVE COME SOONER ...
DON'T SAY THAT.
BUT IT'S SO GOOD THAT YOU CAME. THERE IS SOMETHING I WANTED YOU TO SEE BEFORE WE LEFT FOR THE FRONT.

IF YOU START DOWN INTO THE VALLEY NOW, YOU'LL REACH THE CASTLE WHILE IT'S STILL LIGHT.
I'LL GO ON AHEAD AND TELL FATHER.

NAUSICAÄ... HOW YOU HAVE GROWN.

A THOUSAND YEARS HAD PASSED SINCE THE MAMMOTH INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATIONS OF THE PAST HAD DIMINISHED, AND FADED INTO THE DARK VASTNESS OF TIME. IT WAS THE CLOSING OF THE CERAMIC ERA.
THE VALLEY OF WIND WAS A SMALL KINGDOM ON THE EDGE OF THE FRONTIER, GIVEN FRAIL PROTECTION AGAINST THE POISONS OF THE SEA OF CORRUPTION BY THE CONSTANT WINDS BLOWING THROUGH FROM THE OCEAN.


FOR THE WISE WOMEN OF THE CASTLE, I BRING THE KHOTOSH HERBS YOU ASKED OF ME.
Aahh!

THE FINEST GIFT OF ALL!
WITH THESE, MANY AN INFANT WHO MIGHT HAVE DIED WILL LIVE...

NAUSICAÄ, CALL FORTH ALL THE YOUNG MAIDENS WHO HAD THEIR HAIR PUT UP WHILE I WAS AWAY.

THESE ARE STONES FROM THE RIVER TIARA THAT RUNS THROUGH THE SEA OF CORRUPTION. LET THEM ADORN YOUR GARMENTS ON THE DAY OF YOUR WEDDING.
Oh, MASTER YUPA! THANK YOU SO MUCH!

VERY WELL. NEKARI... TOCTO...
COME FOR-WARD!

THEY'RE... THEY'RE SO BEAUTI-FUL!
HAHAHA... NOW, THEN... FOR WHOM WILL YOU WEAR THEM?

HA HA HA

OUR OLD FRIEND RETURNS TO US ON THIS FORTUITIOUS DAY WHEN THE PLANTING IS ENDED.
EVERYONE WILL BE WANTING TO HEAR YOUR TALES OF DISTANT LANDS.

LET US THROW OPEN THE PANTRIES OF THE CASTLE! TONIGHT, WE FEAST AND CELEBRATE TO OUR HEART'S CONTENT!

AHAHAHA
HA HA
HEHHE

Ah, BUT IT PUTS MY HEART AT EASE TO VISIT THIS VALLEY.
YET EVEN HERE...

THERE ARE FEWER PEOPLE EACH TIME I RETURN.

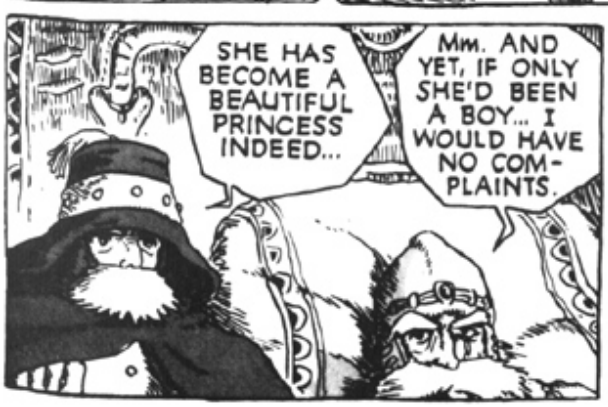
YUPA, MY FRIEND... I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE THINKING. BUT FOR TONIGHT, LET US CAST ASIDE SUCH UNPLEASANT MUSINGS.
MASTER YUPA, PLEASE TRY SOME OF THIS YEAR'S WINE.

Ah, NAUSICAÄ... YOU SAID YOU HAD SOMETHING YOU WISHED TO SHOW ME...?
IT CAN WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW ...

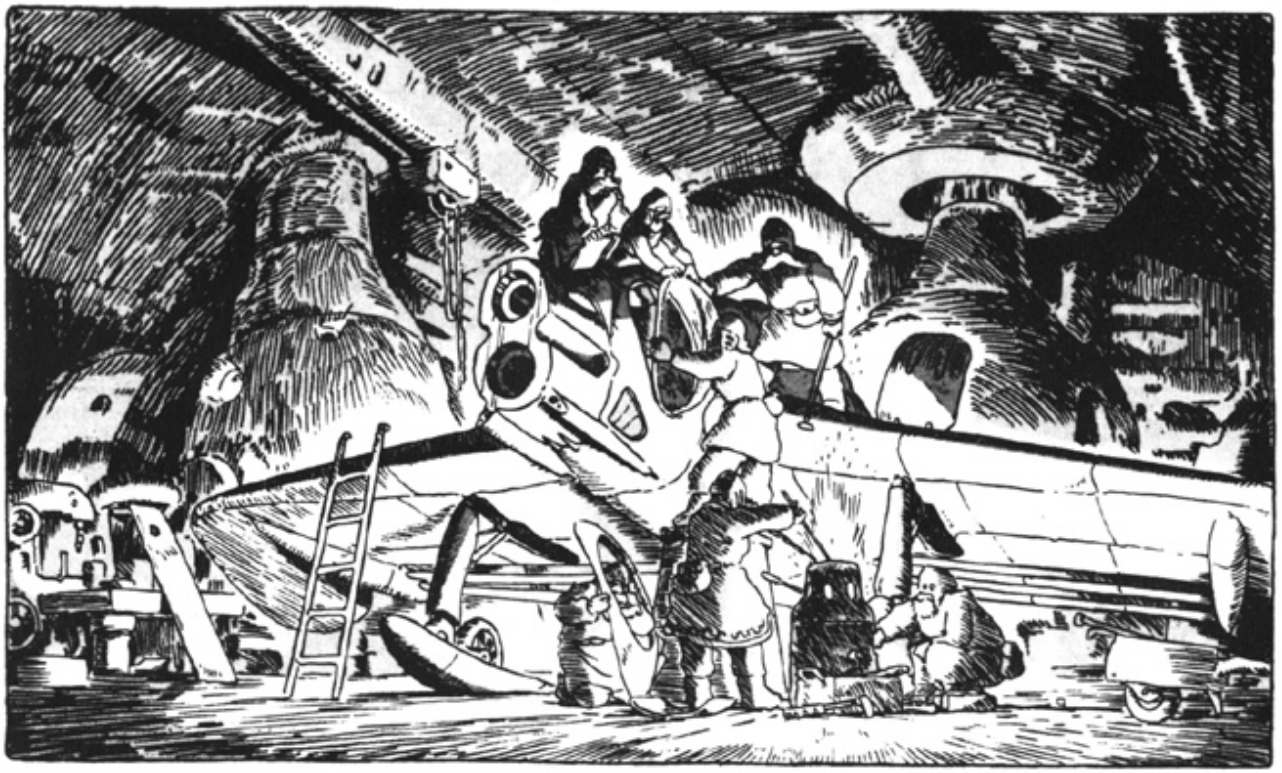
EVERYONE WOULD BE ANGRY IF I KEPT YOU TO MYSELF TONIGHT.

EVEN FATHER IS ITCHING TO HEAR YOUR STORIES!
HA HA HA

PRINCESS! PRINCESS!
DID YOU REALLY SEE AN OHMU?

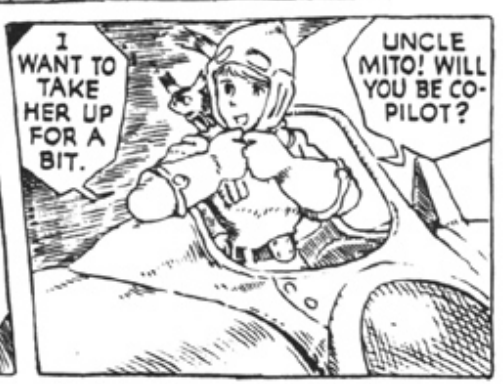

SHE HAS BECOME A BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS INDEED...
Mm. AND YET, IF ONLY SHE'D BEEN A BOY... I WOULD HAVE NO COMPLAINTS.

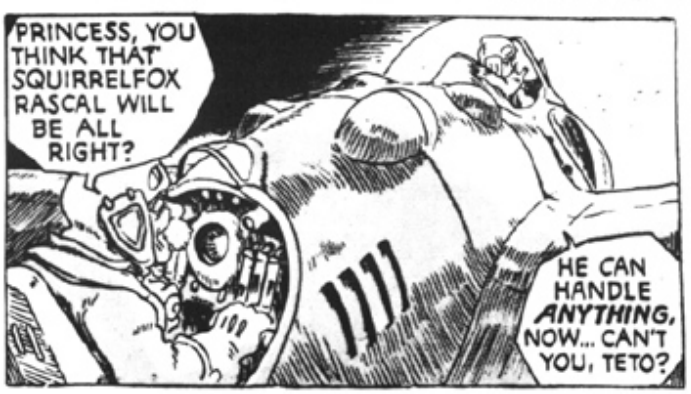
WE HAD ELEVEN CHILDREN, THE QUEEN AND I, BUT ONLY ONE COULD WE RAISE TO ADULTHOOD.
HOHO
HAHAHA
AHAHA

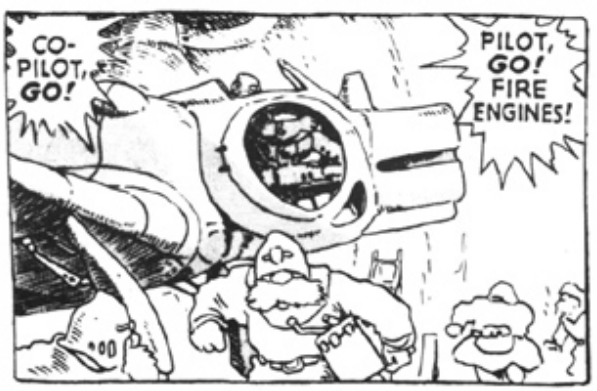


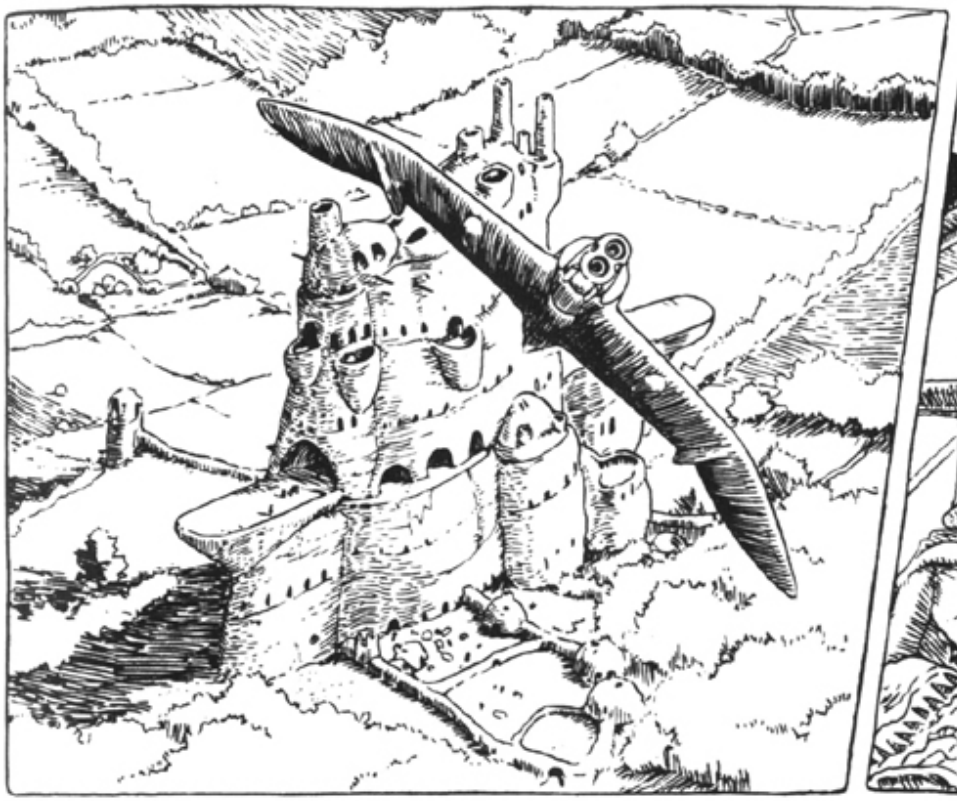
AYE, IT'S A WONDERFUL THING YOU'VE FOUND! SEEMS SOME GOOD CAN COME OF YOUR POKING ABOUT IN THE ROTWOOD, PRINCESS.
WHAT'S THAT? AND JUST WHO WAS IT THAT KEPT MUTTERING ABOUT "NOT GOING NEAR THE FOREST"...?

HA HA HA
STILL, FINDING AN OHMU SHELL BE THE LUCK OF A LIFE-TIME, I'LL WARRANT.


I WANT TO TAKE HER UP FOR A BIT.
UNCLE MITO! WILL YOU BE CO-PILOT?


PRINCESS, YOU THINK THAT SQUIRRELFOX RASCAL WILL BE ALL RIGHT?
HE CAN HANDLE ANYTHING, NOW... CAN'T YOU, TETO?


CO-PILOT, GO!
PILOT, GO! FIRE ENGINES!



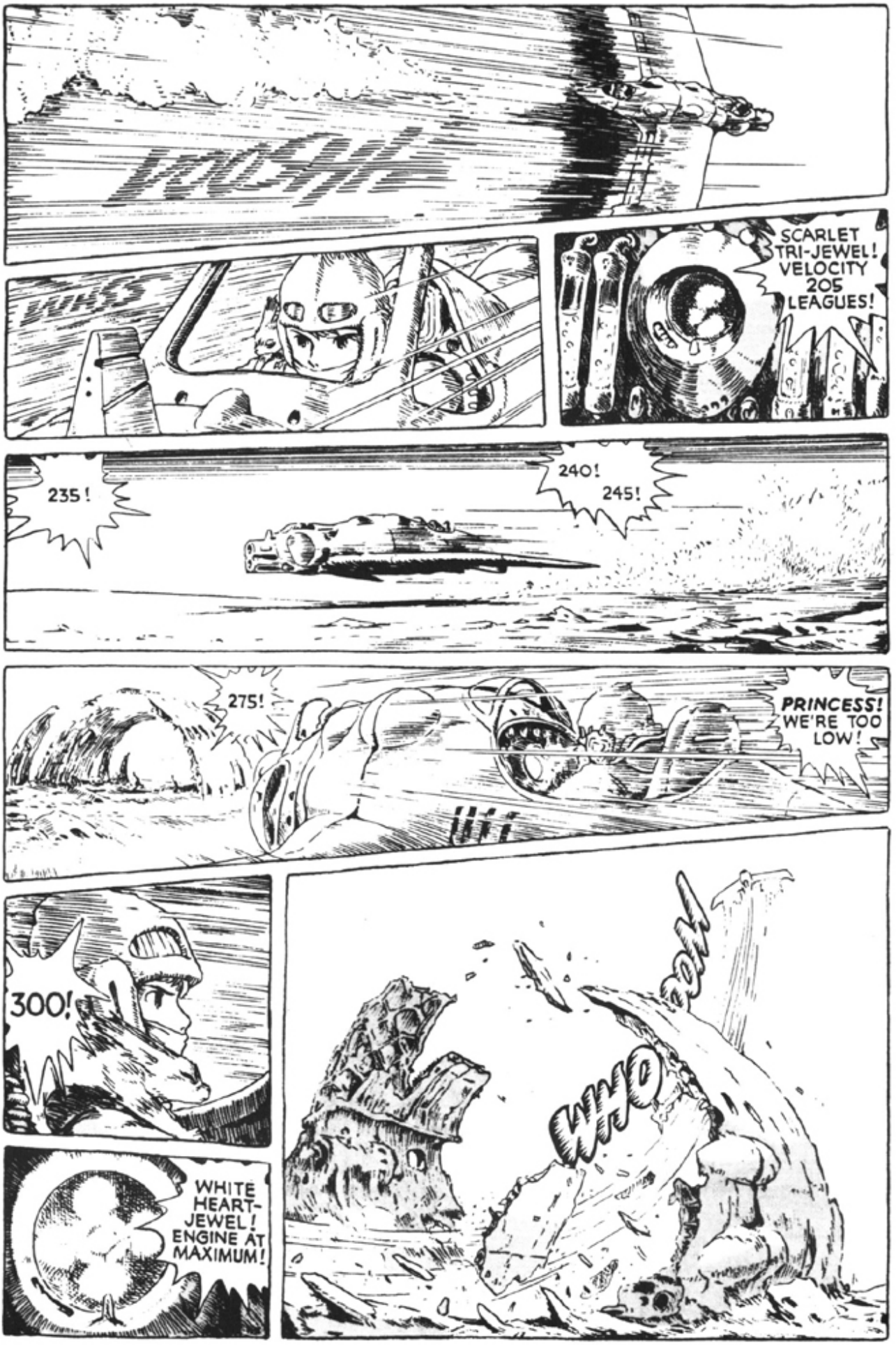
THE GUNSHIP! WOULD THAT BE NAUSICAÄ?
MM. I SHOULDN'T BRAG ABOUT MY OWN DAUGHTER, BUT SHE'S A FINE PILOT.

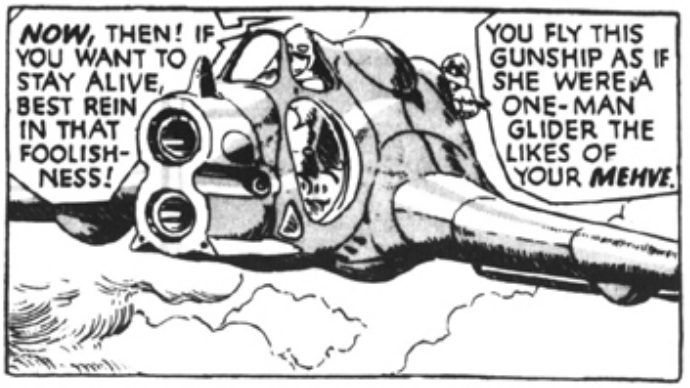
SHE HAS THE HEART FOR IT. WITH JUST THE TOUCH OF A BREEZE ON HER SKIN, SHE CAN READ THE SOUL OF THE WIND... FAR BETTER THAN HER FATHER EVER COULD.
THE HEARTS OF ALL IN THIS VALLEY BELONG TO HER. THERE'S NO RECORD OF A WOMAN BECOMING CHIEFTAIN BEFORE, BUT I DON'T DOUBT SHE CAN DO IT.

SO THEN YOU REALLY DO PROPOSE TO SEND HER OFF TO BATTLE...

WE'RE A TINY COUNTRY, YUPA... LESS THAN 500 PEOPLE. THAT WE'VE MANAGED TO KEEP OUR AUTONOMY AT ALL IS ENTIRELY DUE TO THE GUNSHIP.
THE CHIEFTAIN OF THE VALLEY OF WIND MUST SERVE UNDER THE TORUMEKIAN EMPEROR AS A GUNSHIP PILOT-- SO SAY THE ANCIENT TREATIES. WE MUST OBEY THEM.

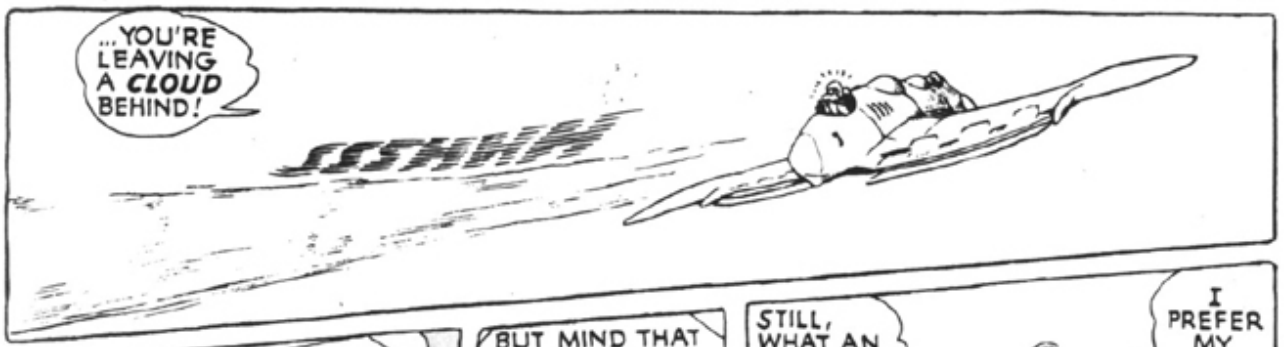
WELL DO I KNOW THIS IS A FOOLISH WAR. YET IN THIS HARSH WORLD OF OURS, THE SPARROW MUST LIVE LIKE A HAWK IF HE IS TO FLY AT ALL.


WHOOSH
WHISS
SCARLET TRI-JEWEL! VELOCITY 205 LEAGUES!
235!
240!
245!
275!
PRINCESS! WE'RE TOO LOW!
300!
WHITE HEART-JEWEL! ENGINE AT MAXIMUM!
WHOOM

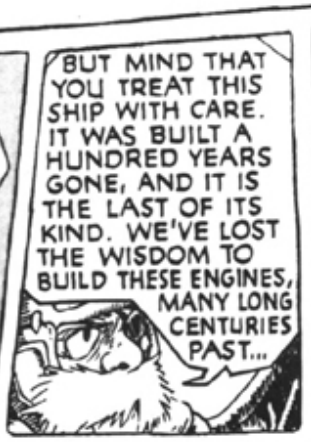

NOW, THEN! IF YOU WANT TO STAY ALIVE, BEST REIN IN THAT FOOLISHNESS!
YOU FLY THIS GUNSHIP AS IF SHE WERE A ONE-MAN GLIDER THE LIKES OF YOUR MEHVE.

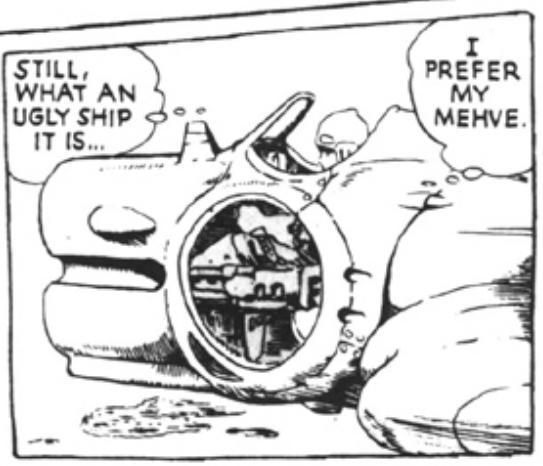
FIRSTLY, BY FLYING SO LOW... EVEN IF BY LUCK YOU EVADE THE ENEMY'S GUNS, YOU'LL PIN YOURSELF ON HIS SPEARS!

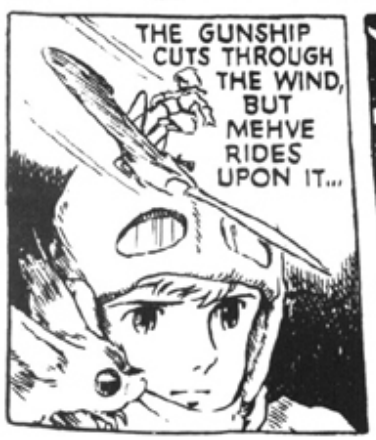
FORGIVE ME, UNCLE MITO! BUT LOOK...! YOU'RE SO STEAMED UP...


...YOU'RE LEAVING A CLOUD BEHIND!
SSHWW

HO HO... PRINCESS, OFTIMES YOU ARE BEYOND ME...

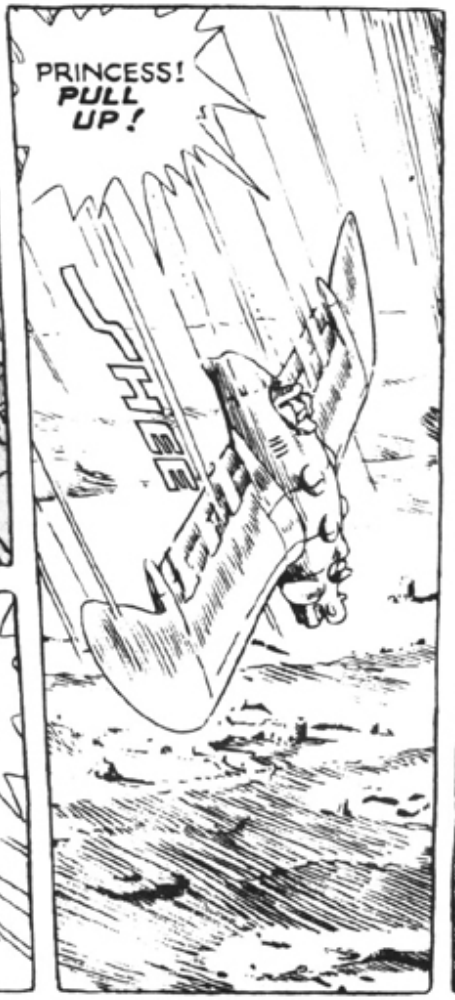

BUT MIND THAT YOU TREAT THIS SHIP WITH CARE. IT WAS BUILT A HUNDRED YEARS GONE, AND IT IS THE LAST OF ITS KIND. WE'VE LOST THE WISDOM TO BUILD THESE ENGINES, MANY LONG CENTURIES PAST...

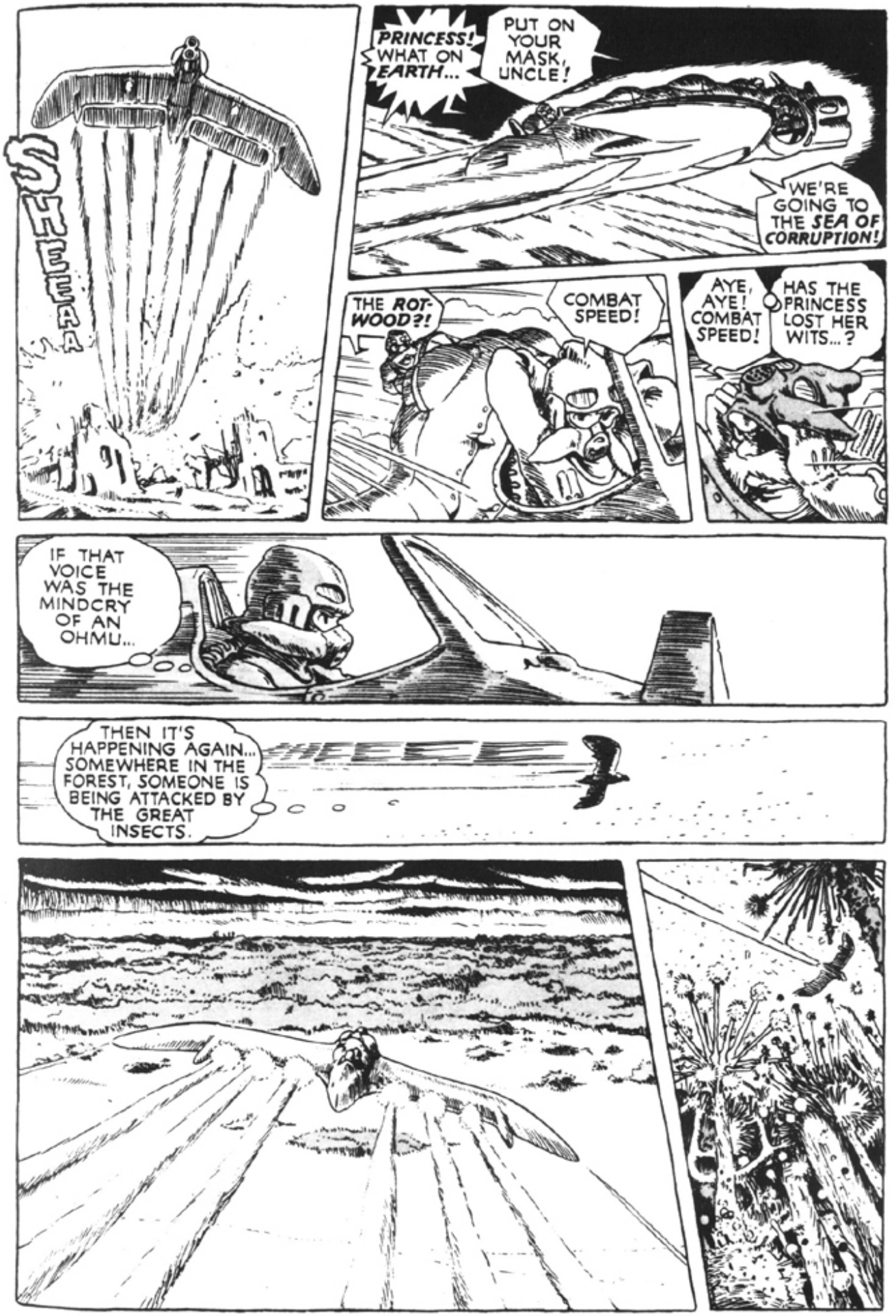

STILL, WHAT AN UGLY SHIP IT IS...
I PREFER MY MEHVE.

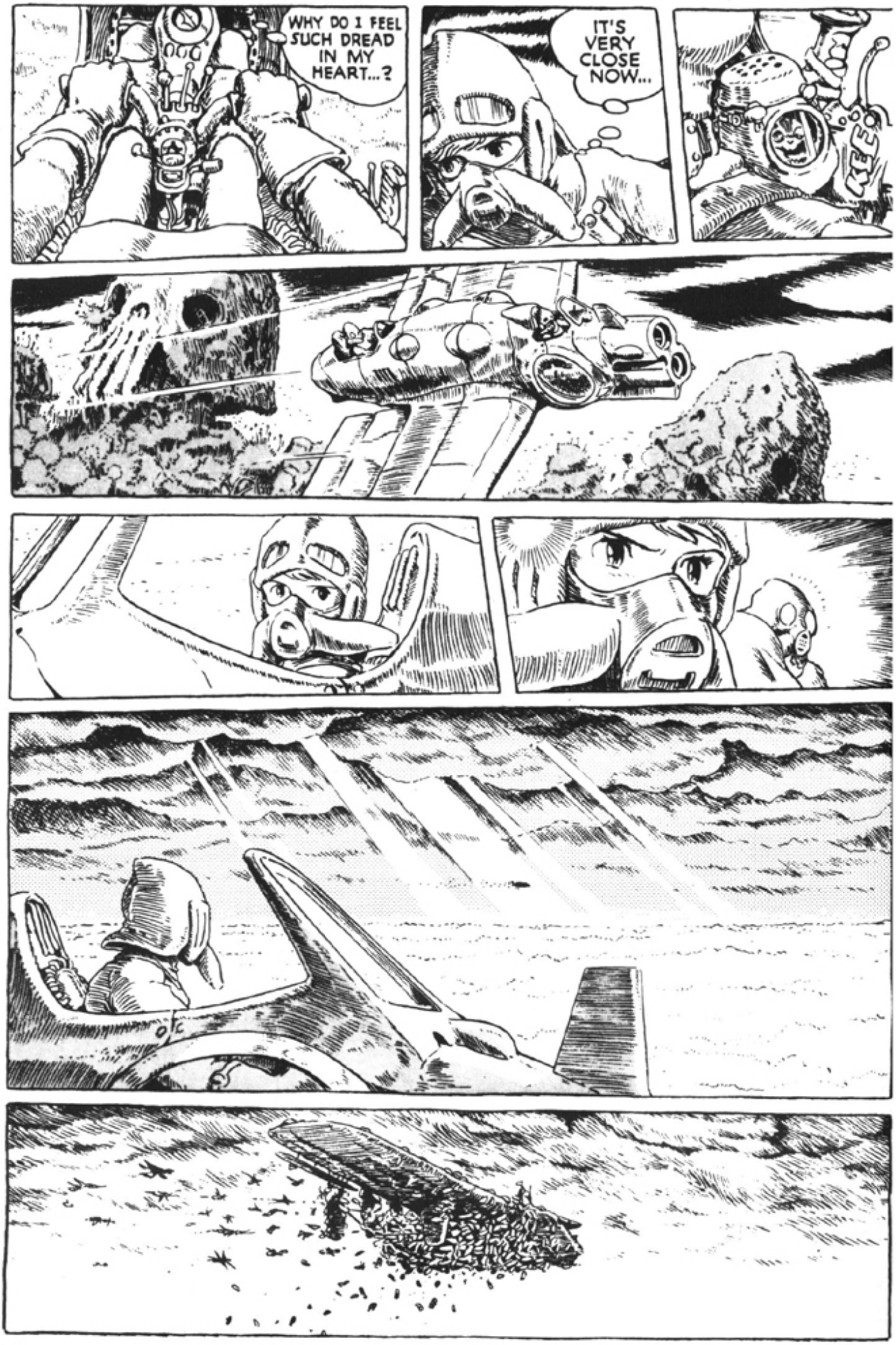

THE GUNSHIP CUTS THROUGH THE WIND, BUT MEHVE RIDES UPON IT...

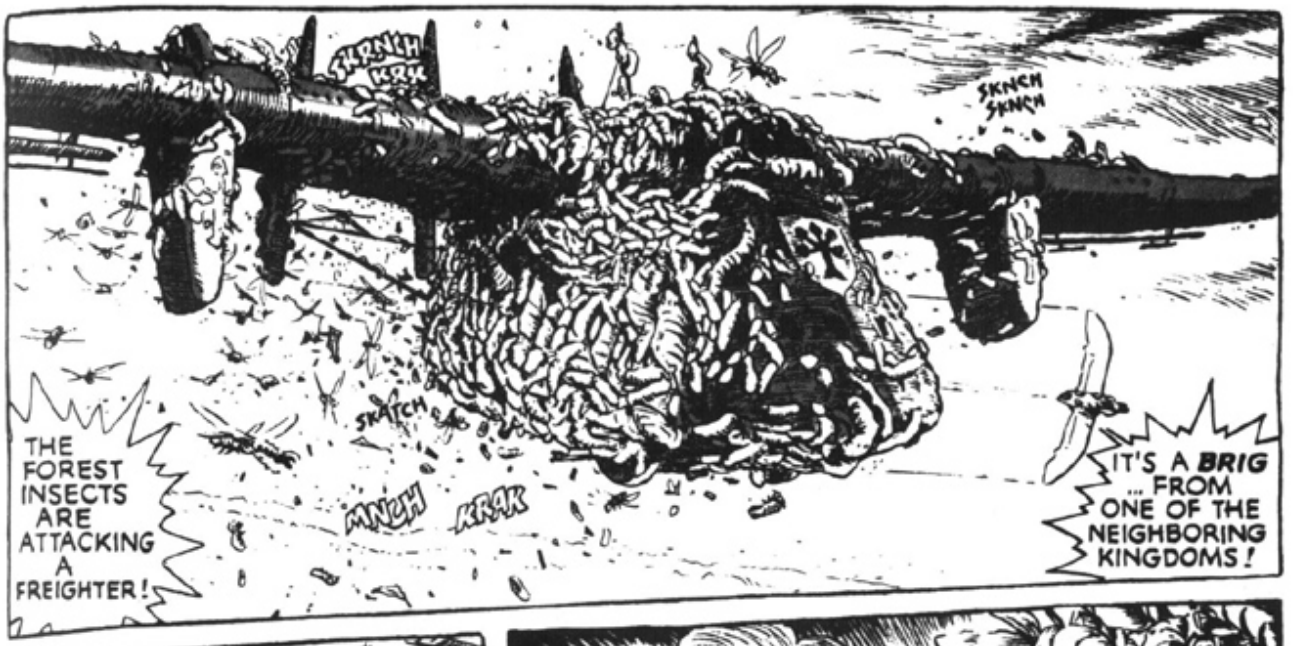
They killed us! They killed us!

THAT CRY! AGAIN!
WE WILL KILL! WE WILL KILL THEM!


PRINCESS! PULL UP!
SHIII


SHEEEEA
PRINCESS! WHAT ON EARTH...
PUT ON YOUR MASK, UNCLE!
WE'RE GOING TO THE SEA OF CORRUPTION!
THE ROT-WOOD?!
COMBAT SPEED!
AYE, AYE! COMBAT SPEED!
HAS THE PRINCESS LOST HER WITS...?
IF THAT VOICE WAS THE MINDCRY OF AN OHMU...
THEN IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN... SOMEWHERE IN THE FOREST, SOMEONE IS BEING ATTACKED BY THE GREAT INSECTS.

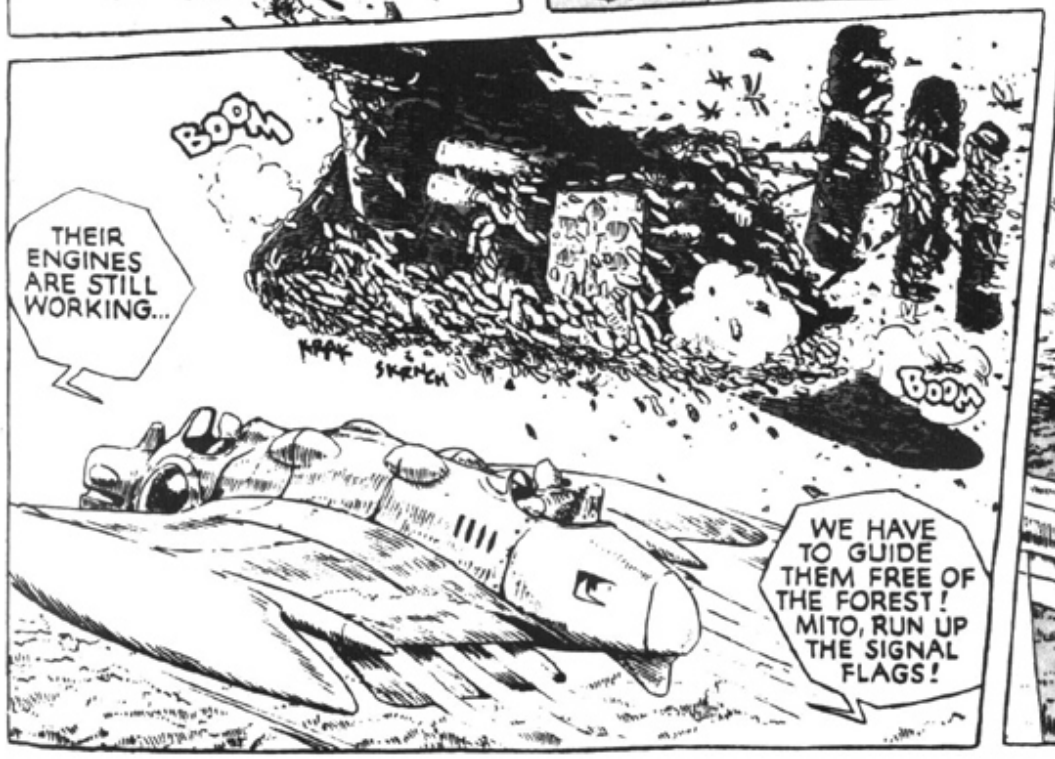

WHY DO I FEEL SUCH DREAD IN MY HEART...?
IT'S VERY CLOSE NOW...

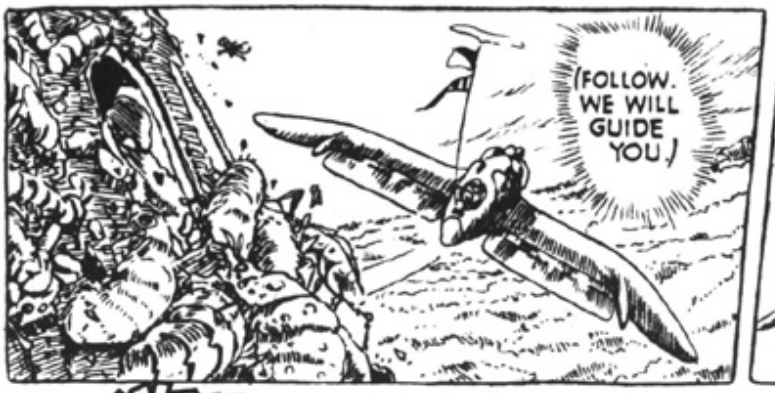

SKRNCH KRK
SKNCH SKNCH
SKATCH
MNCH KRAK
THE FOREST INSECTS ARE ATTACKING A FREIGHTER!
IT'S A BRIG ... FROM ONE OF THE NEIGHBORING KINGDOMS!

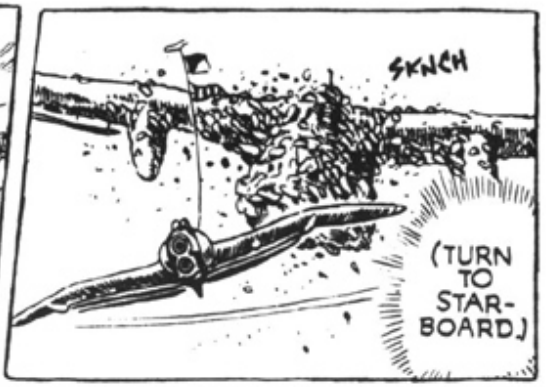
KRK
KNCH
SKRNCH
SKRAKK

BOOM

MITO, THOSE ARE LAND-GRUBS... THAT SHIP MUST HAVE PUT DOWN IN THE SEA OF CORRUPTION!
THE FOOLS MUST HAVE SLAIN SOME OF THE GREAT WORMS IN THE ROT-WOOD... THEY'VE NOT A CHANCE NOW, PRINCESS.

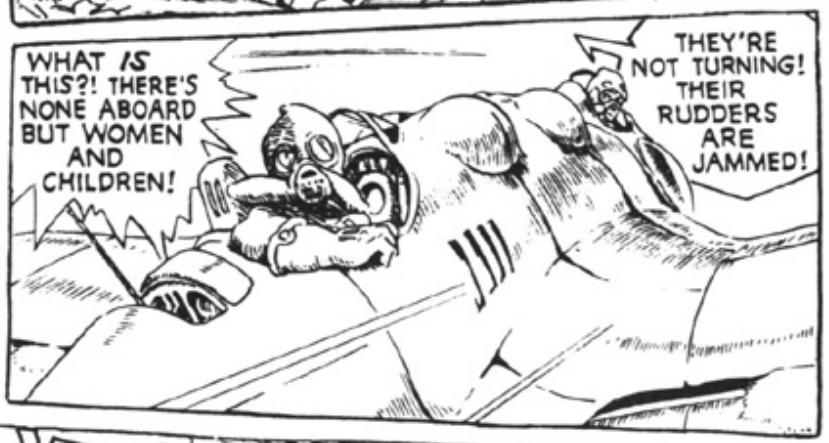

BOOM
THEIR ENGINES ARE STILL WORKING...
KRAK
SKRNCH
BOOM
WE HAVE TO GUIDE THEM FREE OF THE FOREST! MITO, RUN UP THE SIGNAL FLAGS!


(FOLLOW. WE WILL GUIDE YOU.)


SKNCH
(TURN TO STAR-BOARD.)

SKRAK
KNCH
!!

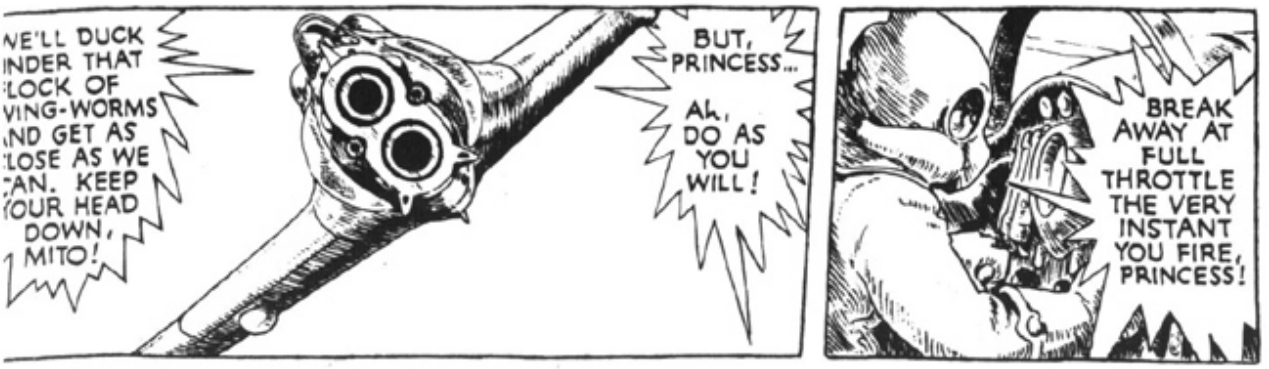
!!


WHAT IS THIS?! THERE'S NONE ABOARD BUT WOMEN AND CHILDREN!
THEY'RE NOT TURNING! THEIR RUDDERS ARE JAMMED!

MITO! THE MUZZLE FLASH FROM THE MAIN CANNON MIGHT DRIVE THE GRUBS OFF THE RUDDERS... WE'LL TRY IT!

VWHOOOOSH
AA! WE'VE LOST THE SIGNAL KITE!

PRINCESS, NO! IF WE GET WITHIN REACH OF THOSE DEVILS, THEY'LL COME FOR US!

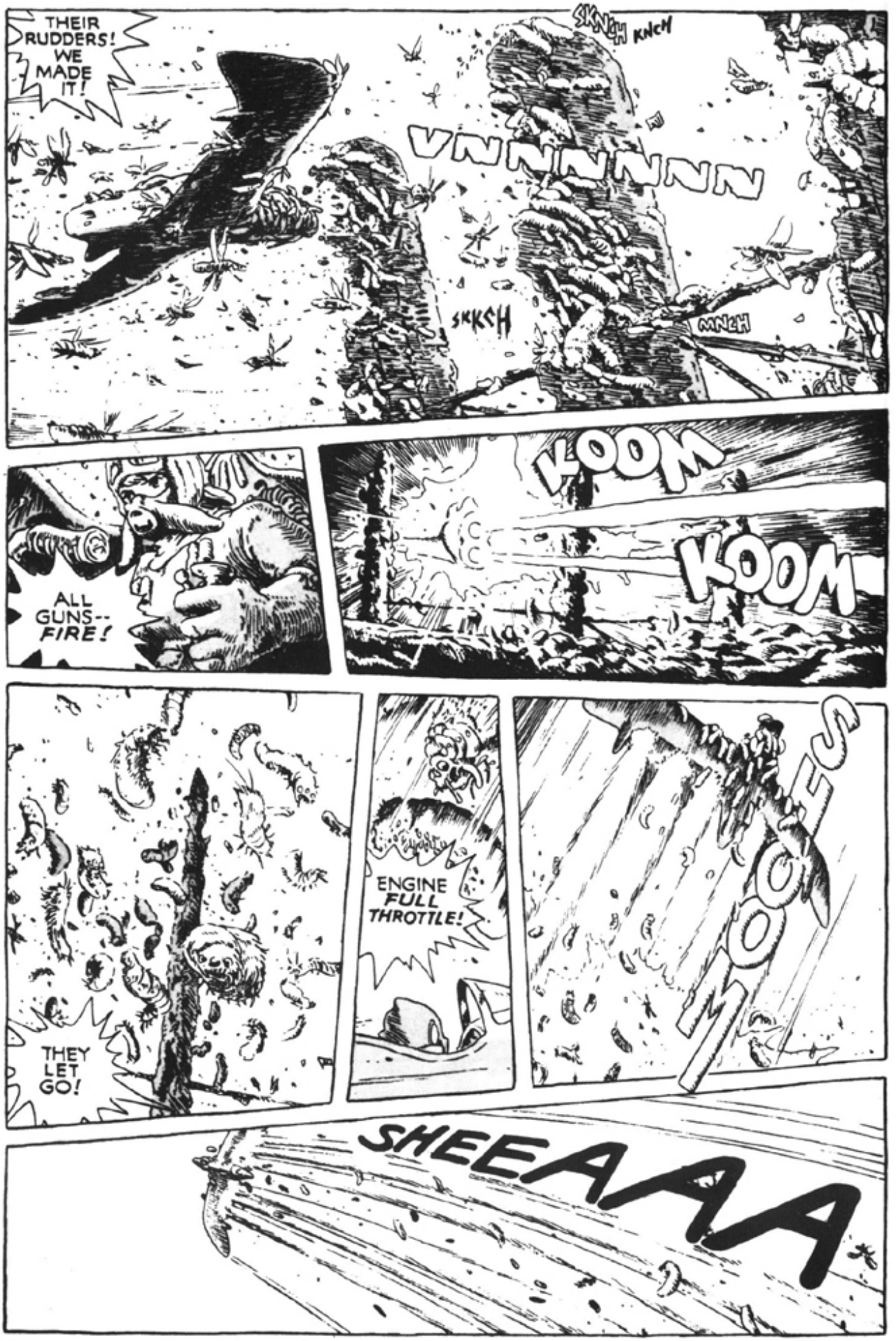

WE'LL DUCK UNDER THAT FLOCK OF FLYING-WORMS AND GET AS CLOSE AS WE CAN. KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, MITO!
BUT, PRINCESS...
AH, DO AS YOU WILL!
BREAK AWAY AT FULL THROTTLE THE VERY INSTANT YOU FIRE, PRINCESS!

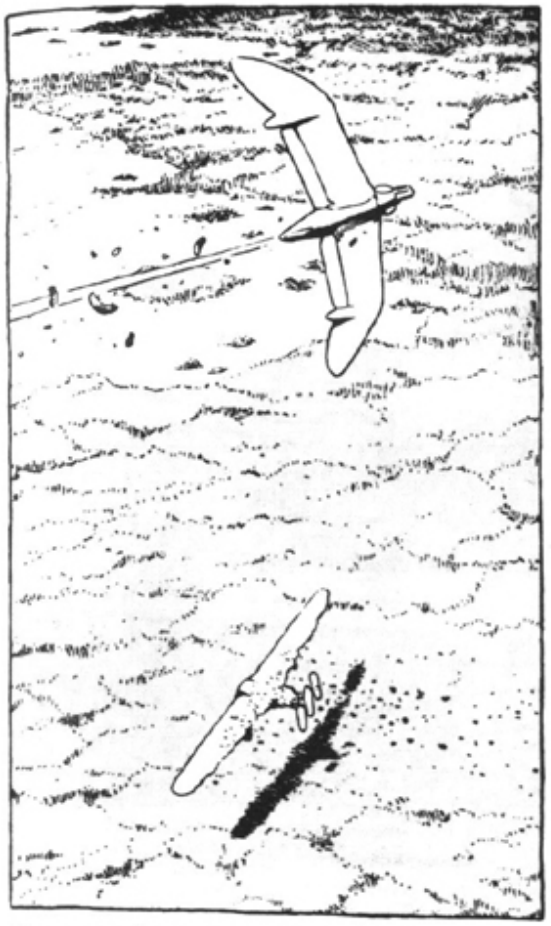
HERE WE GO!

chkk
chikchik
chkk
chkkchikchkkchik
chik
chik
chik chik chik chik

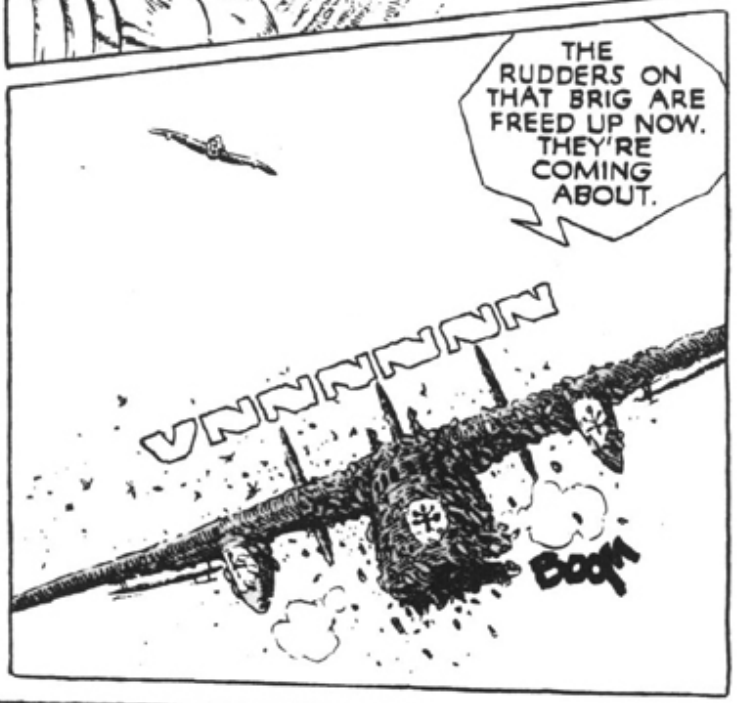
WE CAN'T RISK GETTING CLOSER! PULL OUT OR WE'LL STALL FOR CERTAIN!
chik chik
chkk
chkk chkk
WE'RE ALMOST THERE! I'M GOING AHEAD!

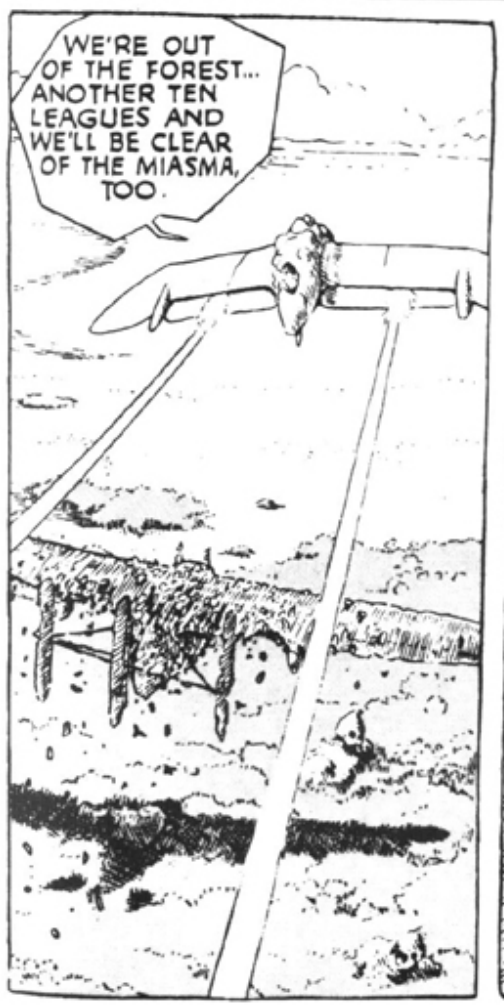
chkk
GET OUT OF OUR WAY !!


THEIR RUDDERS! WE MADE IT!
SKNGH KNCH
VNNNNNN
SKKCH
MNCH
ALL GUNS-- FIRE!
KOOM
KOOM
THEY LET GO!
ENGINE FULL THROTTLE!
TOOFS
SHEEAAA

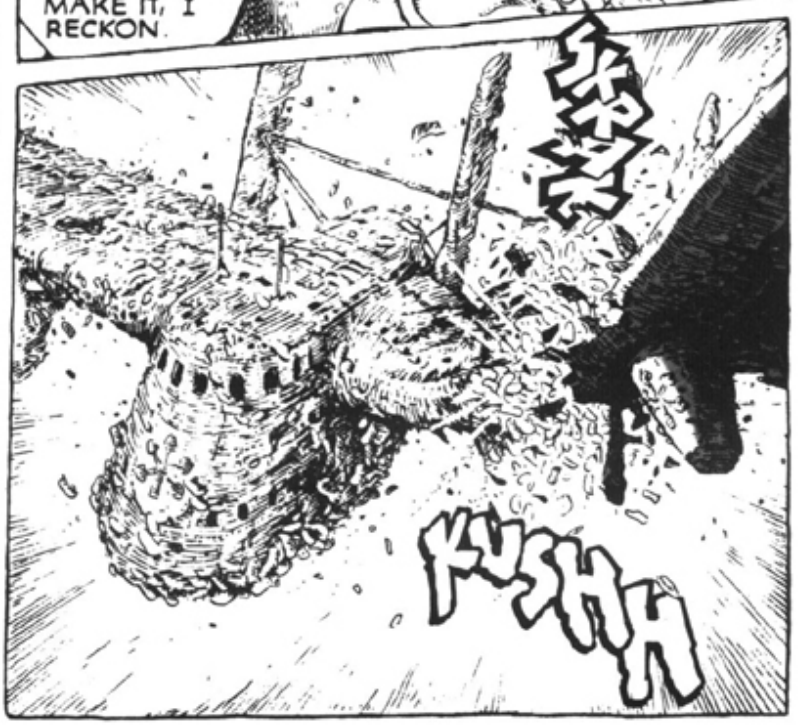


PRINCESS! THE LAST OF THEM HAS COME AWAY... WE'RE ALL RIGHT NOW!


THE RUDDERS ON THAT BRIG ARE FREED UP NOW. THEY'RE COMING ABOUT.
VNNNNNN
BOOM

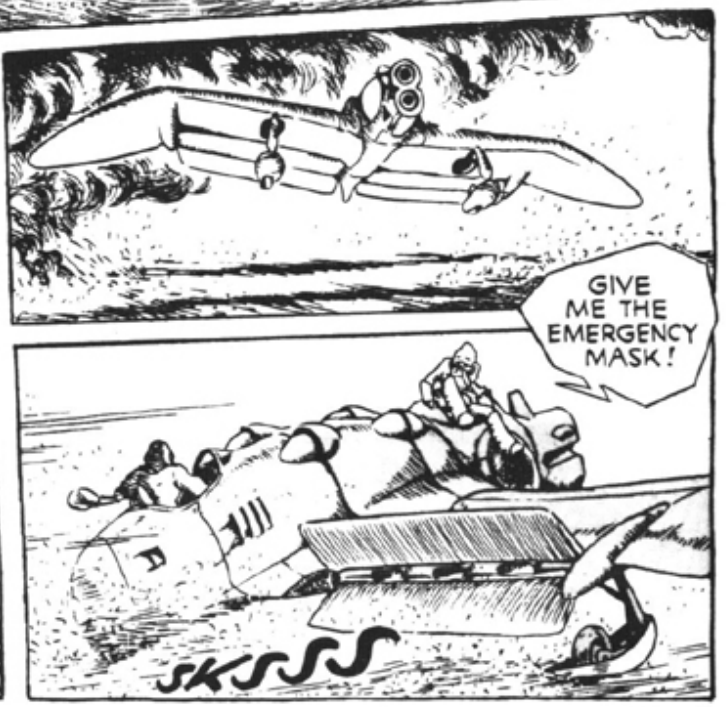

WE'RE OUT OF THE FOREST... ANOTHER TEN LEAGUES AND WE'LL BE CLEAR OF THE MIASMA, TOO.

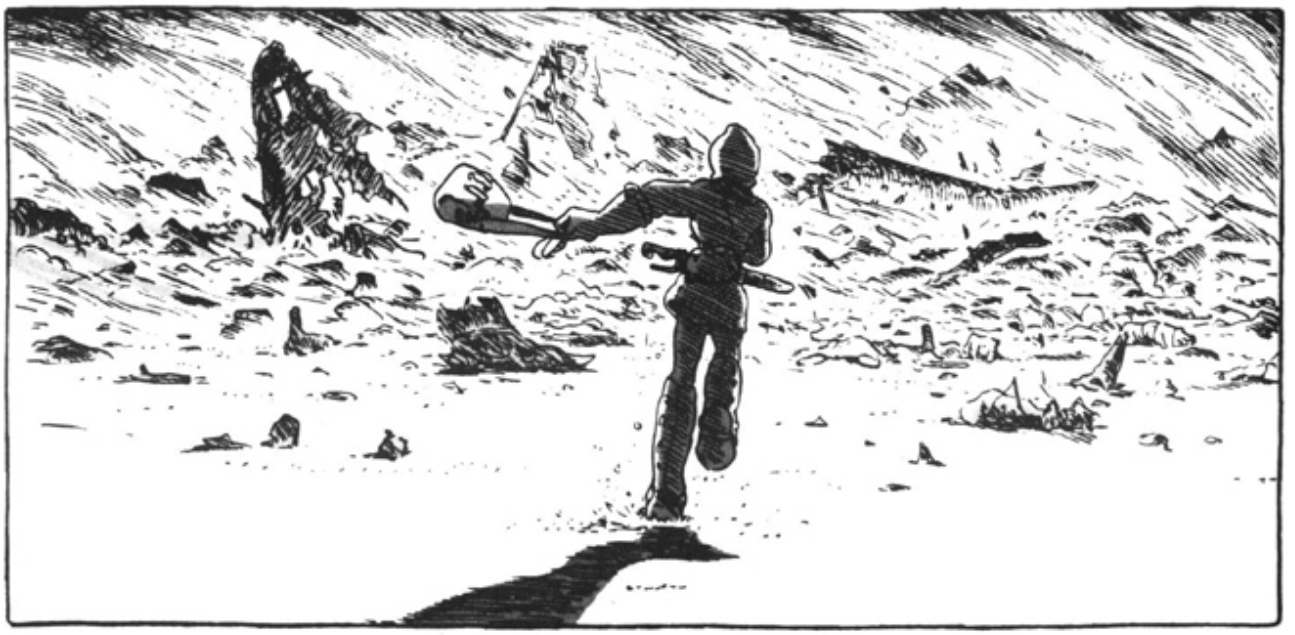
MORE OF THE LANDGRUBS ARE DROPPING FREE... THEY'LL MAKE IT, I RECKON.
UNCLE MITO! THEIR WING!!


SKRAK
KUSHH

SHAOOOM
NO!

THOSE DAMNED GRUBS CHEWED INTO THEIR WING...!
KROOM
I'M PUTTING DOWN!

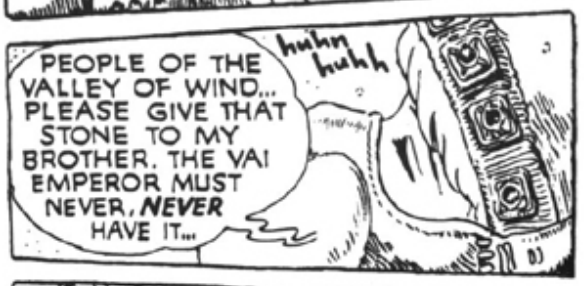

GIVE ME THE EMERGENCY MASK!
SKSSS



THIS... THIS IS HORRIBLE...
NONE BUT WOMEN AND CHILDREN... IT'S LIKE A REFUGEE SHIP.
WHAT ON EARTH HAS HAPPENED TO PEJITE! CITY...?
MITO!
THIS GIRL'S STILL BREATHING.
KRAK
THE MASK... QUICKLY!
W... WATER...
DON'T TRY TO TALK. JUST BREATHE...
hahh... hahh...
hahn hahh
YOU... YOU'RE FROM THE VALLEY OF WIND, AREN'T YOU? THANK YOU FOR... FOR TRYING TO HELP... US...
HANG ON!
MY LADY, I SEE YOU ARE A PRINCESS OF THE HOUSE OF PEJITE!. DO YOU HAVE ANY PARTING WORDS?
THIS... GIVE THIS TO... TO MY ELDER BROTHER. MY NAME IS RASTEL... DAUGHTER OF THE CHIEFTAIN OF PEJITE!...

PEJITEI WAS ATTACKED LAST NIGHT BY THE IMPERIAL GUARD OF THE VAI EMPEROR OF TORUMEKIA. WE WERE THE SOLE SURVIVORS. THE ENEMY PURSUED US... WE WERE FORCED TO HIDE IN THE SEA OF CORRUPTION. THE GREAT INSECTS CAME...

PEJITEI IS AN ALLY OF TORUMEKIA, BOUND BY ANCIENT TREATIES! WHY WOULD THEY...?


PEOPLE OF THE VALLEY OF WIND... PLEASE GIVE THAT STONE TO MY BROTHER. THE VAI EMPEROR MUST NEVER, NEVER HAVE IT...
huhn huhh

I GIVE YOU MY WORD. WE'LL SEE THAT NONE BUT YOUR BROTHER RECEIVE IT. WHERE MIGHT HE BE FOUND?

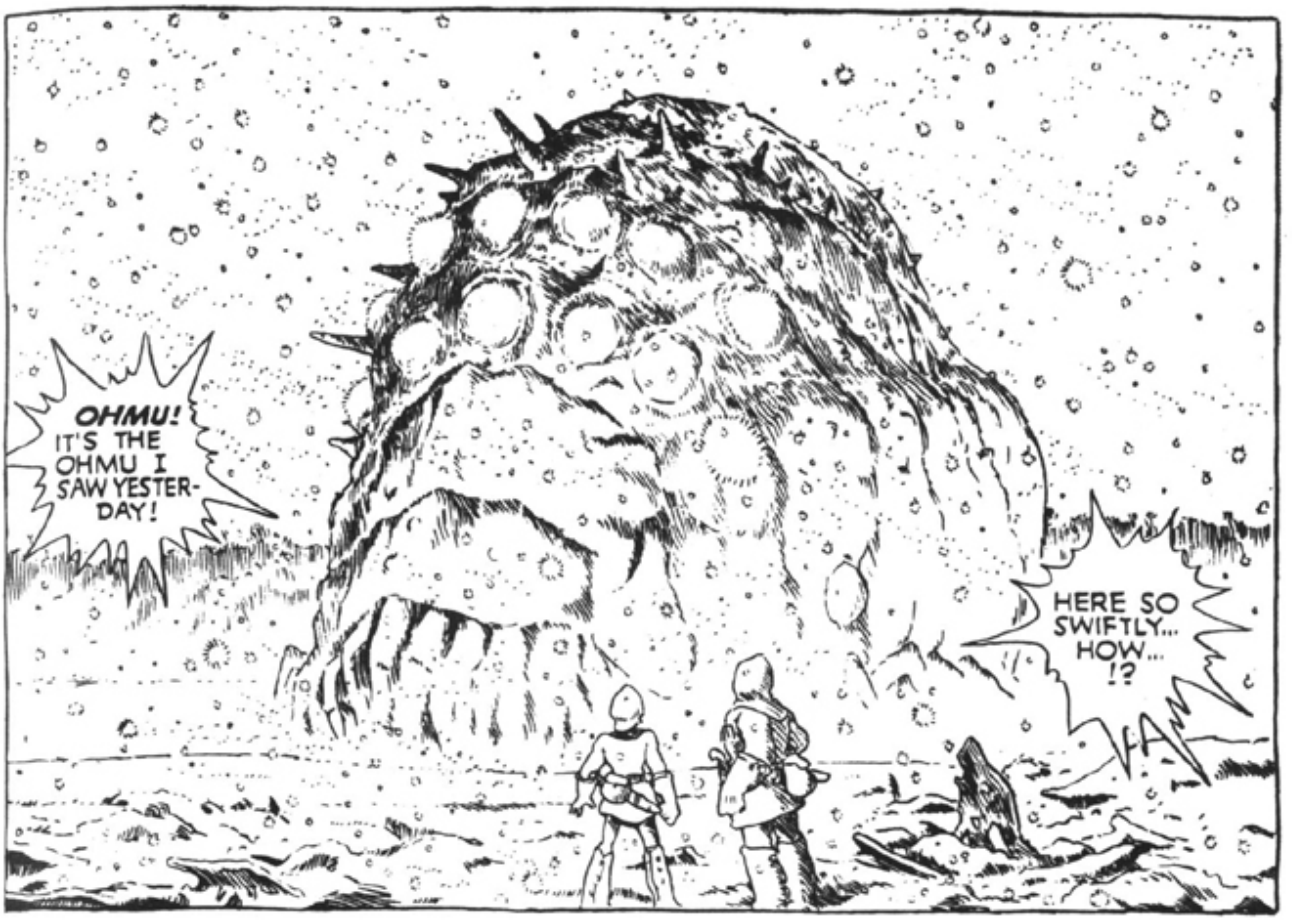
PROMISE... PLEASE PROMISE...

.....
.....

PRINCESS... LET US RETURN TO THE VALLEY. THE PLANTS OF THE FOREST SCENT FOOD-- THEY'VE RELEASED THEIR SPORES. IN A LITTLE WHILE, THIS TOO WILL BE BURIED.
AND WE MUST WARN THE VALLEY OF WHAT HAS BEFALLEN PEJITEI.

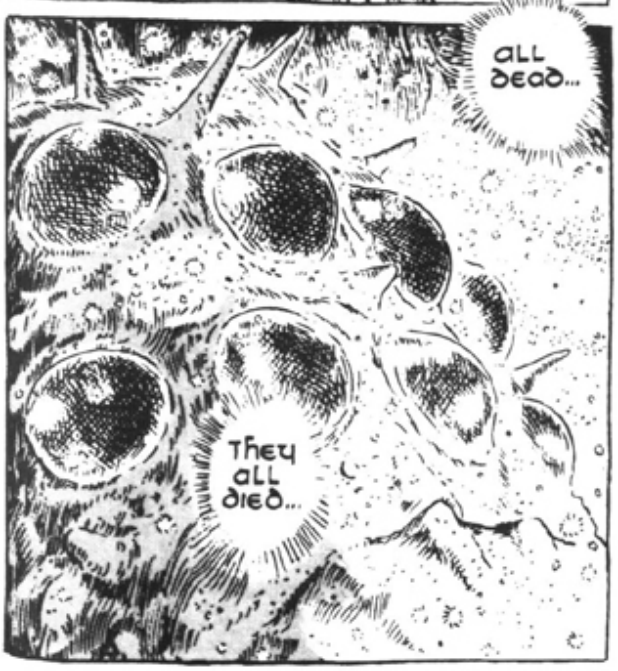
AAA!
WHAT TH...
!?!

....
....


OHMU! IT'S THE OHMU I SAW YESTERDAY!
HERE SO SWIFTLY... HOW...!?

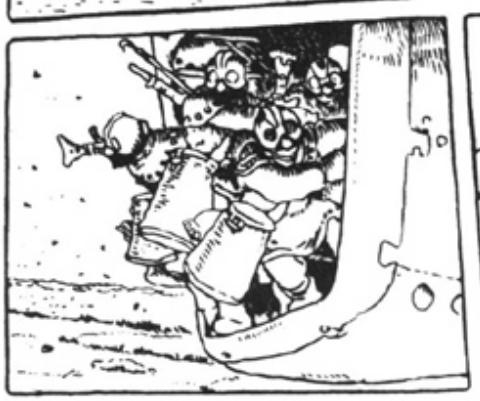
PRINCESS... TO THE GUNSHIP... QUICKLY...
WAIT... HIS EYES ARE GLOWING BLUE... HE DOESN'T MEAN TO ATTACK.

OHMU... YOU'RE...
YOU'RE CRYING...


ALL DEAD...
THEY ALL DIED...

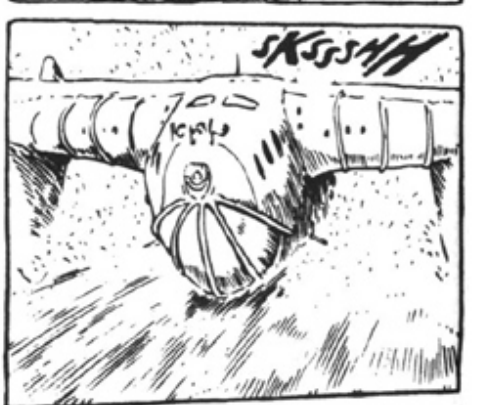
VRNNNN

GRN GRN GRN
VRNNNN

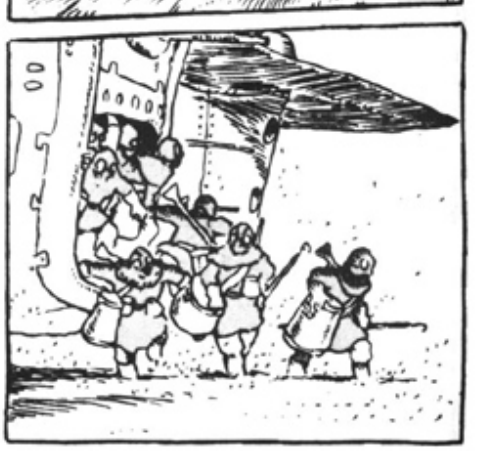


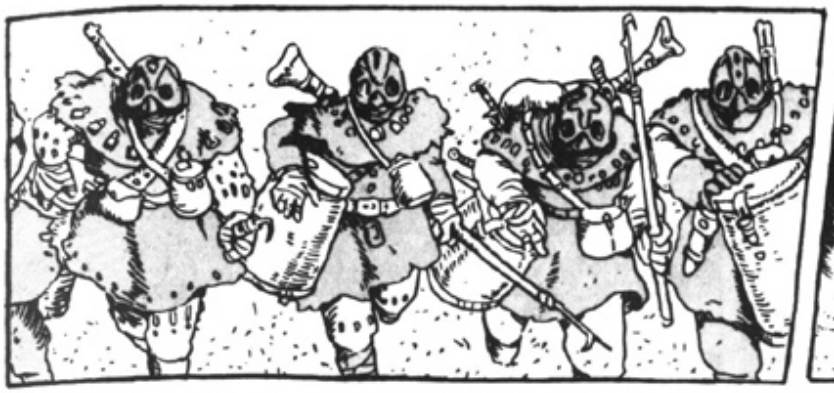
IT'S THAT PEJITE! BRIG THAT GOT AWAY... NO MISTAKING IT.

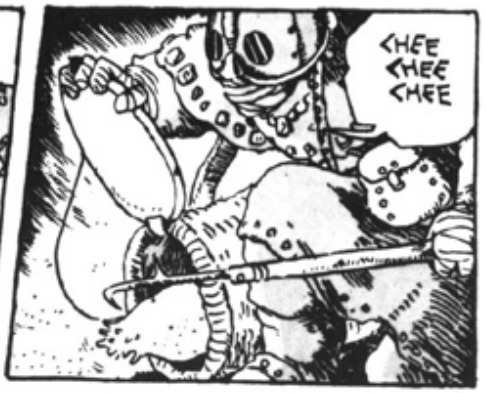
LAND THE WORM-HANDLERS.


SKSSSHH

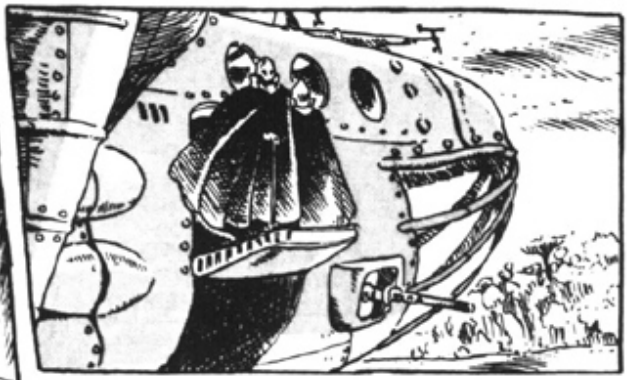
VNNNA
TO STAR-BOARD! THE WRECK OF A SHIP!






CHEE CHEE CHEE

CHEE CHEE CHEE CHEE
CHEE CHEE
SNEF
SNEF
SNEF



DISGUSTING SAVAGES. THEY *ENJOY* SEARCHING CORPSES.

THE CREW HAS BEEN COMPLAINING THAT HAVING THOSE SCUM ABOARD DEFILES A PROUD SHIP OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD.
PERHAPS. BUT THEY'RE USEFUL TO HAVE ON A SEARCH.

WE *HAVE* TO FIND IT-- AT ALL COSTS.

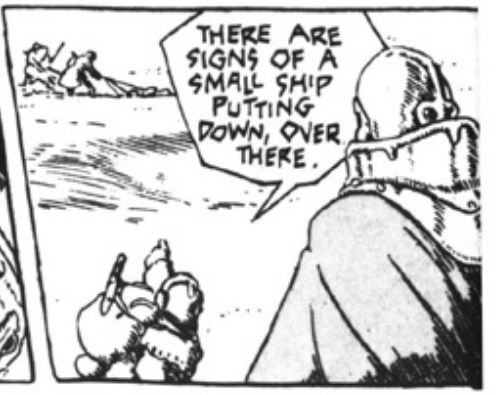
IT'S BEEN TAKEN BY SOMEONE? ARE YOU *SURE*?
FROM THE WAY THE FUNGI ARE SPROUTING, THE BRIG PROBABLY CRASHED THIS MORNING. THE SMELL IS HERE, BUT THAT WHICH YOU ARE SEEKING IS GONE.

SNEF SNEF

SNEF
KNEE KNEE

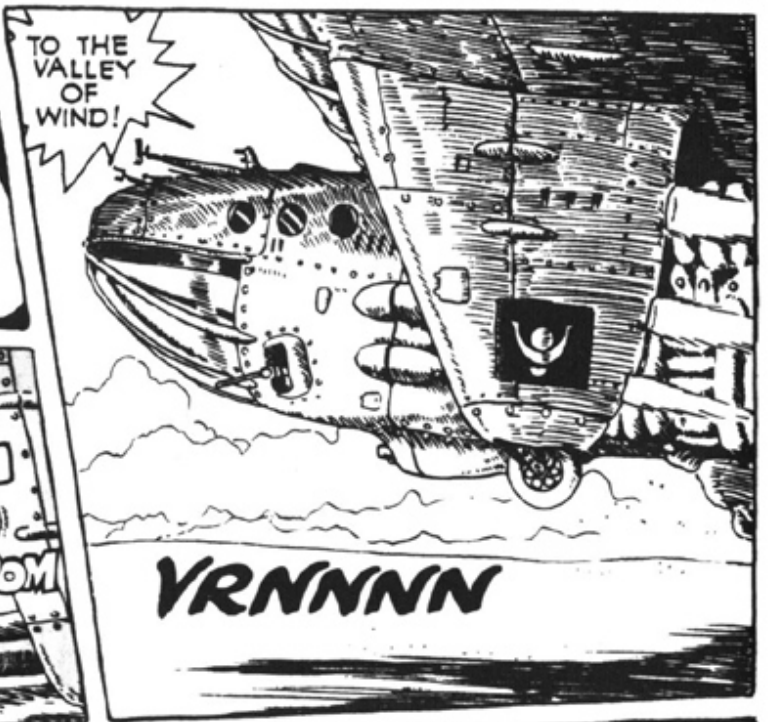
MY SLUG-WORMS FELT THE SCENT STRONGLY ON THE BODY THAT WORE THIS CROWN...
...AND THAT BODY HAD BEEN CAREFULLY BURIED.

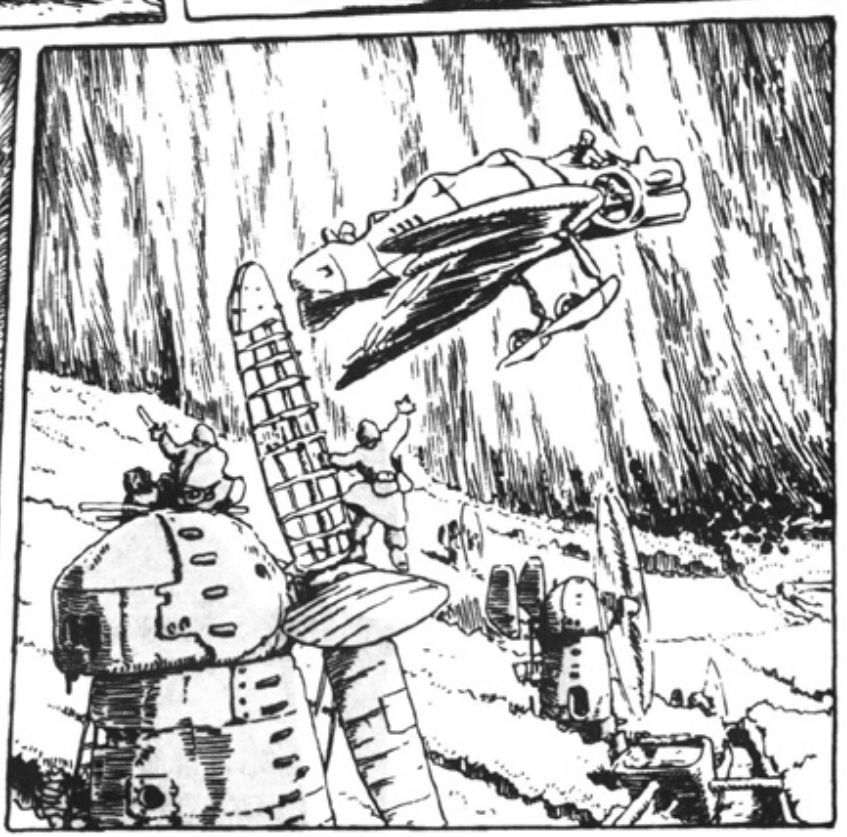
THE PRINCESS OF PEJITE! WORE SUCH CROWNS...

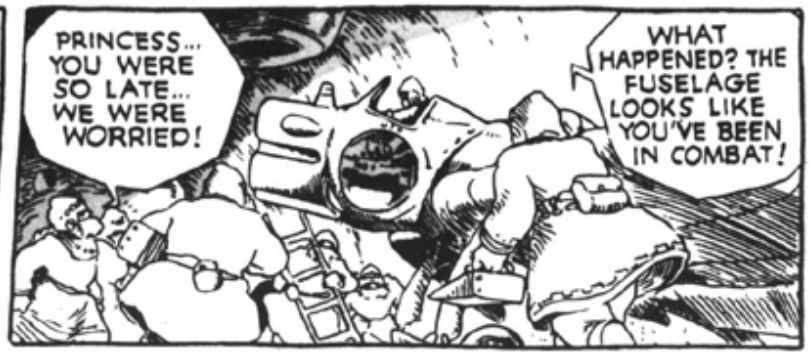

THERE ARE SIGNS OF A SMALL SHIP PUTTING DOWN, OVER THERE.

COMMANDER, DO YOU THINK THAT SHIP TOOK IT?
IF IT'S A SHIP FROM THESE PARTS, THEN...

ALL PREPARE FOR IMMEDIATE TAKEOFF!
KSHOOOM
KSHOOM
KSHOOM
KSHOOM


TO THE VALLEY OF WIND!
VRNNNN



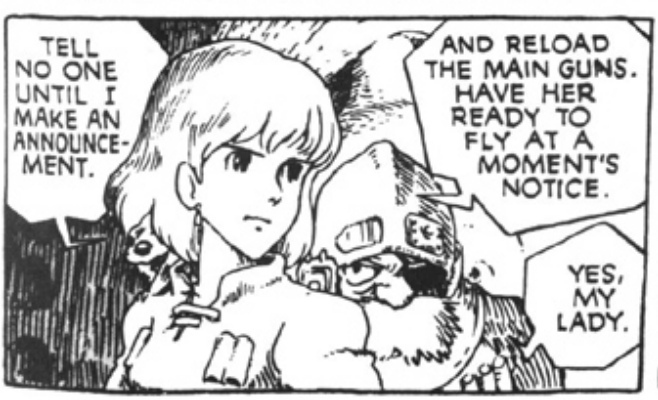

PRINCESS... YOU WERE SO LATE... WE WERE WORRIED!
WHAT HAPPENED? THE FUSELAGE LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN IN COMBAT!

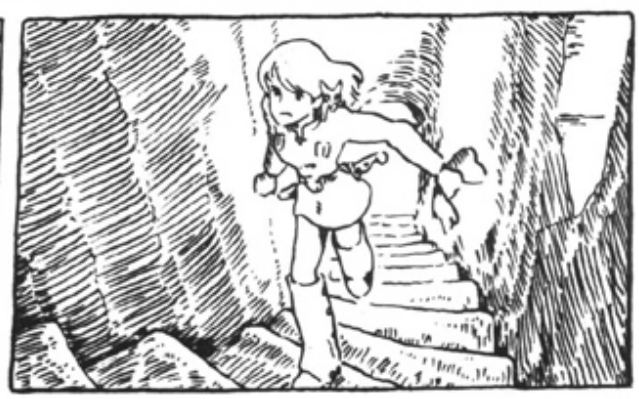
THERE'S BEEN AN INCIDENT. BRING THE FIRE-WANDS, QUICKLY!

THERE ARE STILL SPORES IN THE COCKPIT.
Y- YES, MY LADY. YOU'VE BEEN TO THE SEA OF CORRUPTION AGAIN...?

TETO, BE STILL! IT'LL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE.
POK
POK
POK
THUMP THUMP

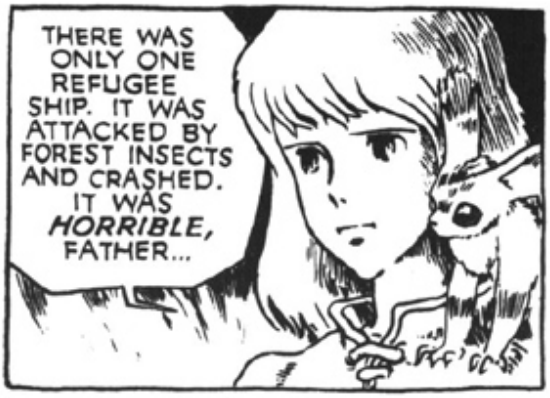
YEEOW!
DON'T GET IT SO CLOSE!
POK
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR GOING TO THE ROTWOOD! IF EVEN ONE OF THOSE GETS INTO THE FIELDS, THERE'LL BE AN UPROAR, LET ME TELL YOU!

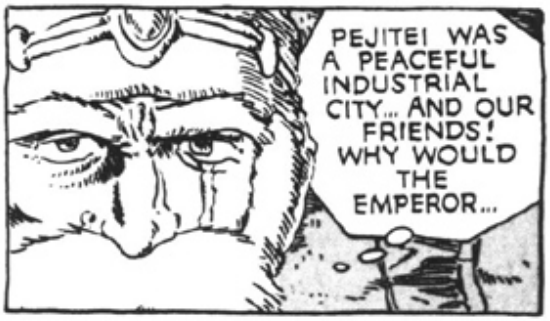

TELL NO ONE UNTIL I MAKE AN ANNOUNCE-MENT.
AND RELOAD THE MAIN GUNS. HAVE HER READY TO FLY AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.
YES, MY LADY.

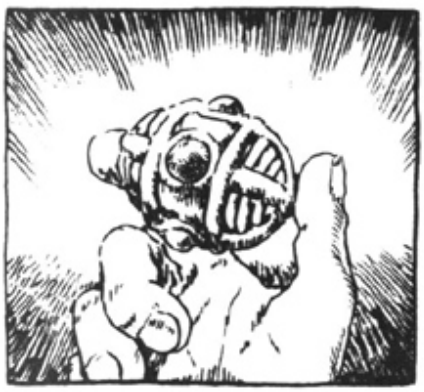


PRINCESS! WHAT'S ALL THE EXCITE-MENT?
Ah, WIND-WATCHER! TIGHTEN THE GUARD!
EEK!
OH! SORRY!
BAM
FATHER!
IT'S TERRIBLE! THE CITY OF PEJITE!...
STOP! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS, NAUSICAÄ!?
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR A CHIEFTAIN TO LOSE CONTROL.
IF THEIR LEADER IS IN A PANIC, THE PEOPLE WILL BE ALARMED AND SHAKEN.
MY BODY HAS ALL BUT TURNED TO STONE. THE DESTINY OF THIS VALLEY IS ON YOUR SHOULDERS.
JHIL... MUST YOU LAY SUCH A BURDEN ON THIS CHILD...?
THE GRAVER THE CRISIS, THE CALMER YOU MUST BE, LIKE A PINNACLE OF ROCK IN THE WHIRL-WIND.
IF YOU UNDER-STAND, THEN SPEAK.
YES, FATHER.

THE CITY OF PEJITEI HAS BEEN DESTROYED?!


THERE WAS ONLY ONE REFUGEE SHIP. IT WAS ATTACKED BY FOREST INSECTS AND CRASHED. IT WAS *HORRIBLE*, FATHER...


PEJITEI WAS A PEACEFUL INDUSTRIAL CITY... AND OUR FRIENDS! WHY WOULD THE EMPEROR...

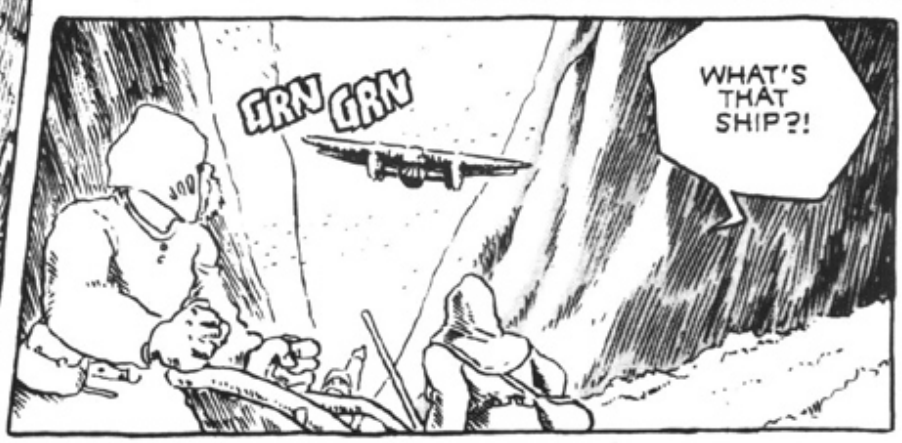


I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A THING BEFORE.
IT SEEMS TO BE PART OF SOME MACHINE, BUT IT'S TERRIBLY OLD.

PEJITEI HAS A MINESHAFT, THEY'VE DUG TO EXCAVATE ENGINES FROM ONE OF THE ANCIENT CITIES BURIED DEEP BENEATH THE EARTH. NO DOUBT THIS CAME FROM THERE...

IF THIS STONE IS THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS, IT MUST CONCEAL A MIGHTY POWER.

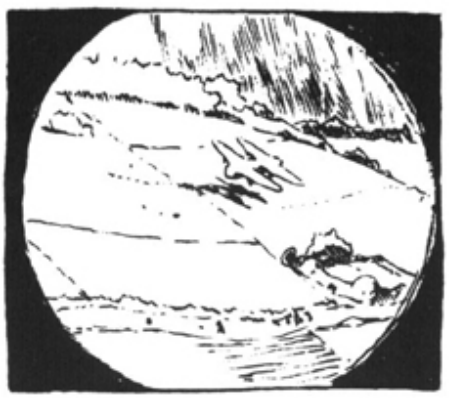
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, I WANT TO CARRY OUT THE LAST WISH OF THAT GIRL, RASTEL. I WANT TO GIVE THIS STONE TO HER BROTHER.

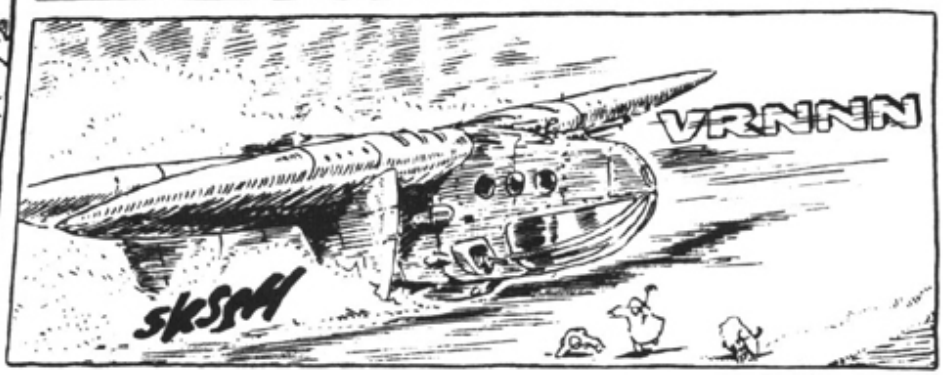

GRN GRN
WHAT'S THAT SHIP?!

VRNNRNN
A TORUMEKIAN ARMORED CORVETTE!
THAT SHIP... IT'S ONE OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD! THIS MUST BE SERIOUS!
THEY'RE GOING TO LAND...!
CALL EVERYONE TO THE CASTLE!
QUICK! SEND MESSENGERS OUT TO THE MEN IN THE FIELDS!
THOOM
THEY MAY BE SEARCHING FOR THAT PEJITEIAN BRIG. I'LL GO MYSELF.
Hmm... NAUSICAÄ, SOMEDAY, YOU WILL LEAD OUR PEOPLE. WHATEVER THIS IS ALL ABOUT, IT IS YOUR FIRST TRIAL.
UNTIL YOU HAVE FOUND THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER, ACT WITH CAUTION!
YES, FATHER!

PRINCESS! THEY'RE LANDING ON THE EAST EDGE OF THE VALLEY, WITHOUT PASSING OUR INSPECTION!

DAMN THEM...THEY KNOW THEY SHOULD LAND OUTSIDE THE VALLEY, TO KEEP OUT THE SPORES...
THEY THINK WE'RE TOO SMALL TO FIGHT BACK!



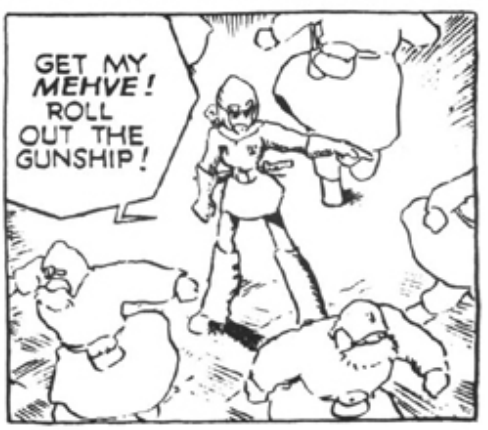

VRNNNN
SKSSH

INTOLERABLE... THAT'S A NEWLY SEEDED FIELD.
NOW WE'LL HAVE TO BURN OFF THAT ENTIRE AREA.

WORMHANDLERS! WHY WOULD THE IMPERIAL GUARD HIRE WORM-HANDLERS?!
IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL, THIS VALLEY COULD BECOME A SECOND PEJITE!...

THIS IS AN ACT OF WAR!
WORM-HANDLERS! THOSE FILTHY MAGGOT-MEN WILL FOUL THE ENTIRE VALLEY!

QUIET, EVERYONE! I'LL DEAL WITH THIS!


GET MY MEHVE! ROLL OUT THE GUNSHIP!

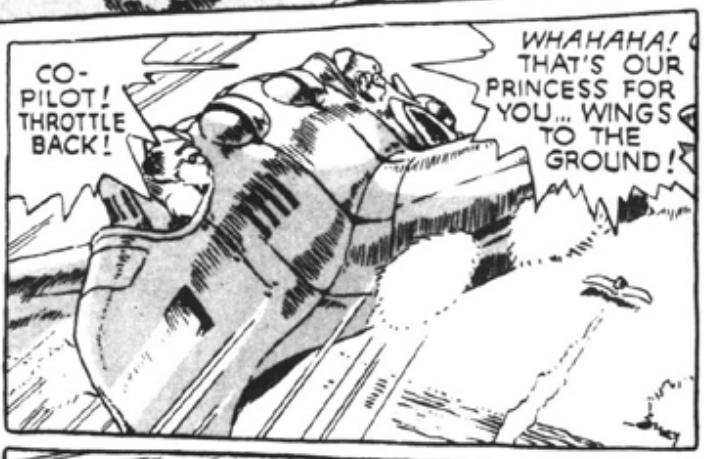
UNCLE MITO! FLY COVER FOR ME!
LEAVE IT TO ME! I'LL BLOW THEIR SHIP TO FLINDERS, IF NEED BE!

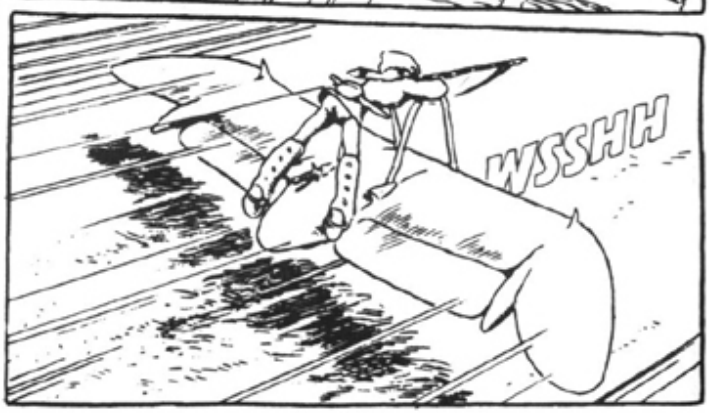
HOLD ON, TETO!

VOM

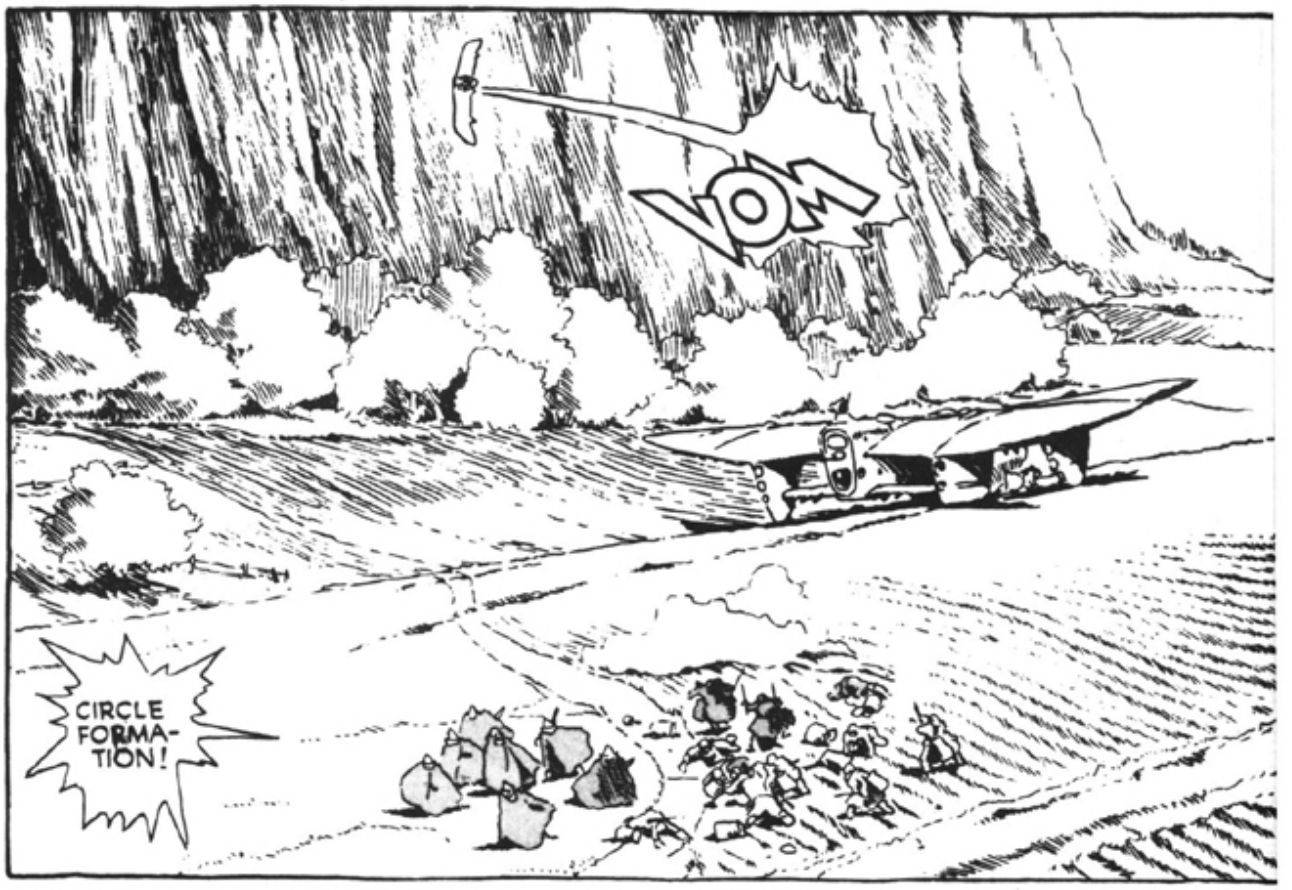
FFT

SHEEDOOM


CO-PILOT! THROTTLE BACK!
WHAHAHA! THAT'S OUR PRINCESS FOR YOU... WINGS TO THE GROUND!

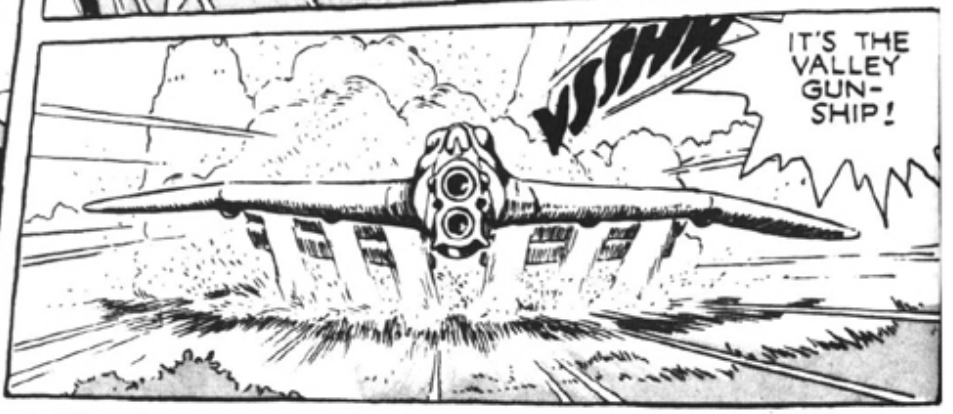

WSSHH

THMP THMP
THMP TH MP
SHEEEE
BLAM
POW
WH
GYAA!
WOM

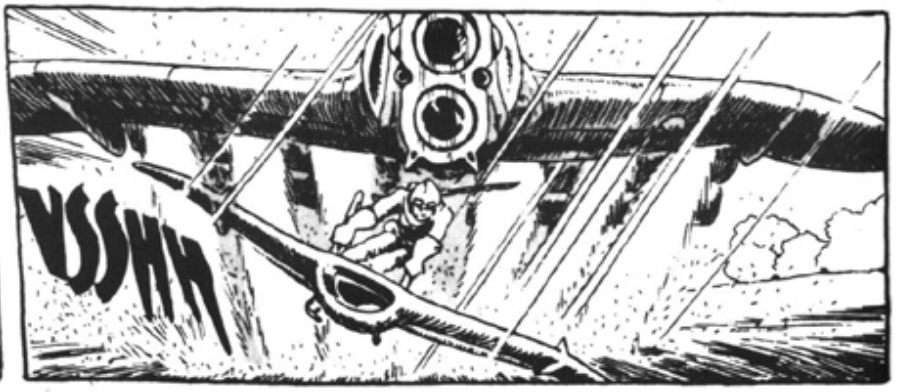

VOM
CIRCLE FORMA-TION!

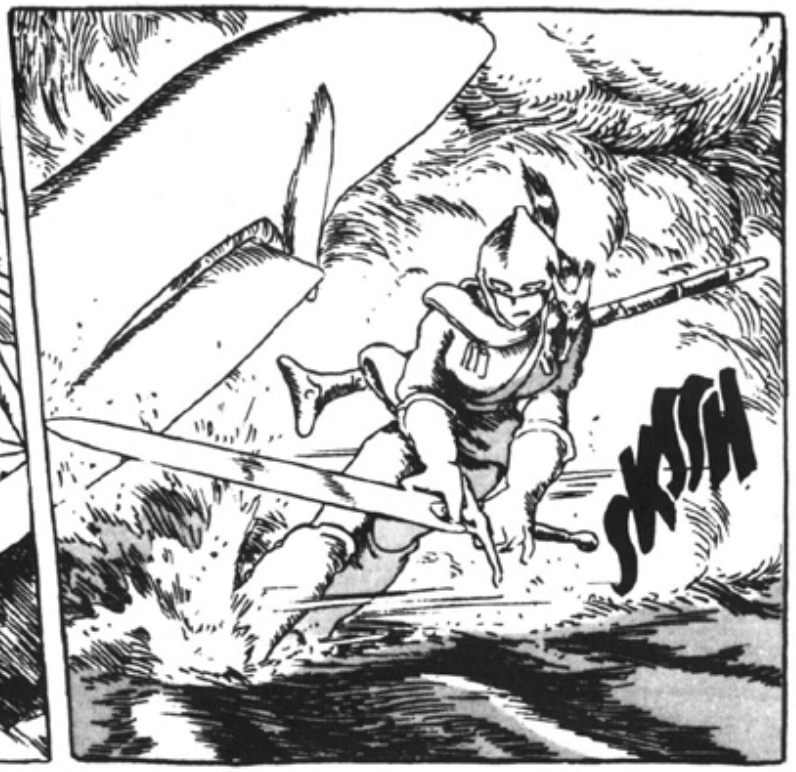
I'LL GET THAT DAMNED SPARROW!

WAIT! HOLD YOUR FIRE!


VSSHH
IT'S THE VALLEY GUN-SHIP!

VSSZ


VSSHH


SKSSSH

SHEEOOOW

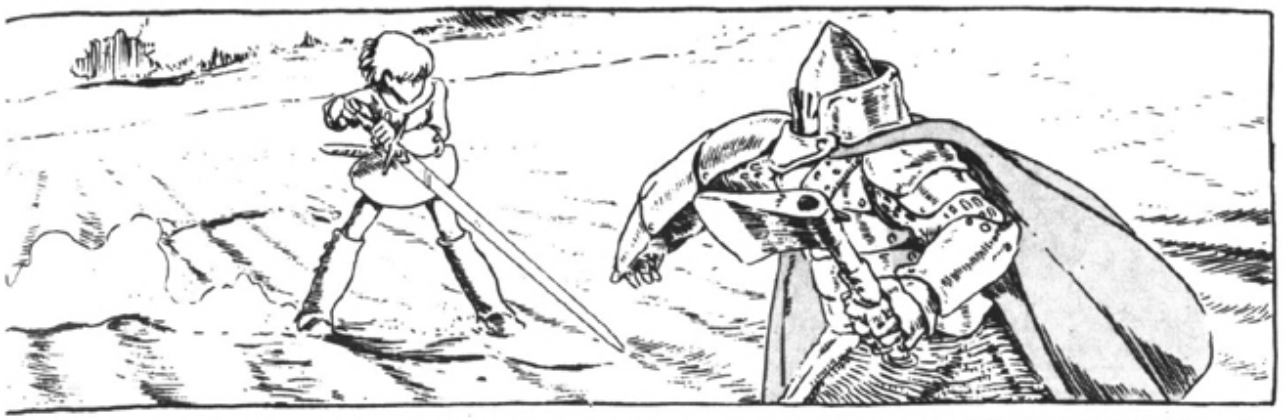
I AM *NAUSICAÄ*, DAUGHTER OF JHIL OF THE VALLEY OF WIND!

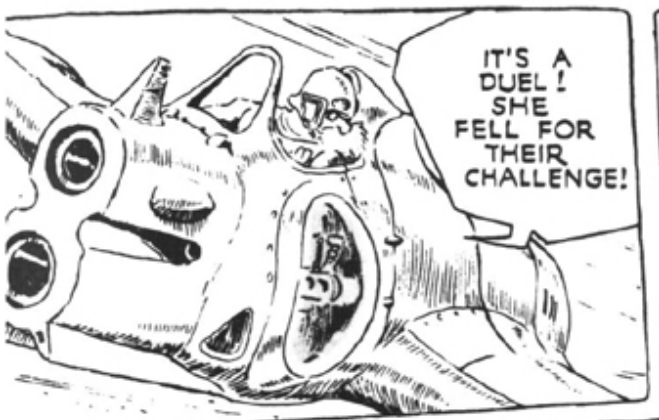
WHO ARE YOU TO DEFILE OUR COUNTRY IN THE COMPANY OF WORM-HANDLERS?!
I FORBID YOU TO ADVANCE ONE STEP BEYOND THIS SWORD.
WITHDRAW *IMMEDIATELY!*

WE HAVE COME IN PURSUIT OF THE TRAITORS OF PEJITEI, ON THE ORDERS OF HIS EMINENCE, THE VAI EMPEROR.
THE WORM-HANDLERS HAVE BEEN ATTACHED TO OUR UNIT AS SPECIAL COMMANDOS.
YOU WILL ALLOW US TO SEARCH THIS VALLEY!
I WILL NOT!
YOU WILL FIND NO TRAITORS IN THE VALLEY OF WIND! WE ARE AN AUTONOMOUS NATION OF THE PERIPHERY, AND WE HAVE NEVER ONCE VIOLATED OUR TREATIES WITH THE EMPEROR!
EVEN THE IMPERIAL BODYGUARDS OF THE EMPEROR HIMSELF MUST ABIDE BY THE RULES OF CONDUCT!
PSST PSST
WHAT IS THAT CROWN THE WORM-HANDLER HAS?!
THOSE MONSTERS! THEY'VE DESECRATED THAT CHILD'S GRAVE!
CHEE CHEE CHEE ...
WEE
THEY HAVE NO RESPECT FOR THE DEAD! IT'S INTOLERABLE! THEY WILL NEVER GET THIS STONE FROM ME!
CHEE CHEE
CHEE CHEE
SNFF SNFF
SNFF SNFF
WRM WRM

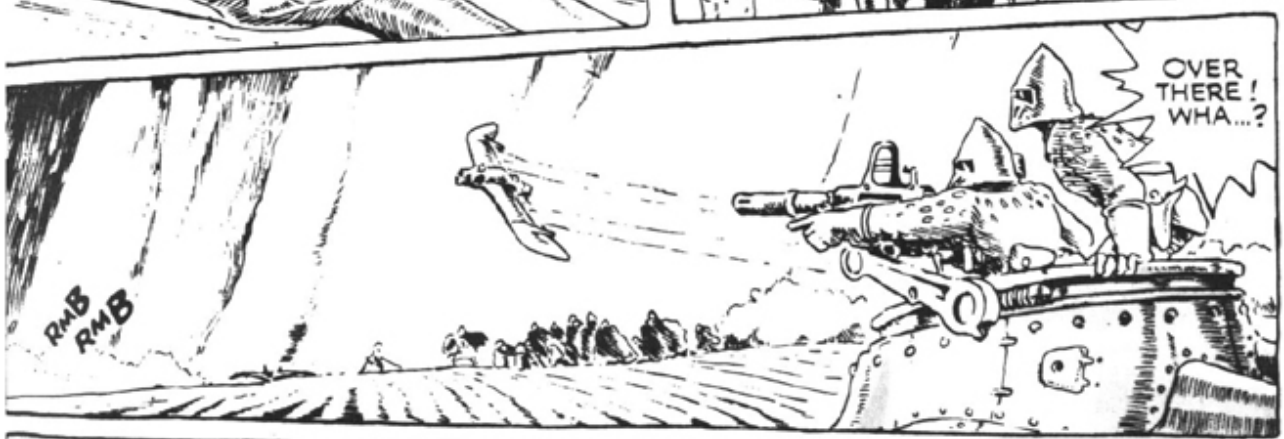
DON'T MOVE, NAUSICAÄ, OR WHATEVER YOU CALL YOURSELF!
WRM
WRM
SNFF
SNFF
Heh, heh... IT SEEMS THE WORMS HAVE SMELLED OUT THE THING WE'RE LOOKING FOR...
SNFF
WRM
WRM
KWEE
KWEE
KZZT
!

ZZAT
KEEE
WRM WRM WRM
WHAT HAPPENED ?!
OUR LOVELY SLUG-WORMS!
THAT GIRL... SOME KIND OF MAGIC...
DOGS OF TORUMEKIA! YOU'VE FOULED MY BODY WITH YOUR DESPICABLE MAGGOTS!
I SHALL NOT FORGIVE!
IS THAT SO? THEN I WILL TAKE YOU ON, LITTLE GIRL!
HSSSS



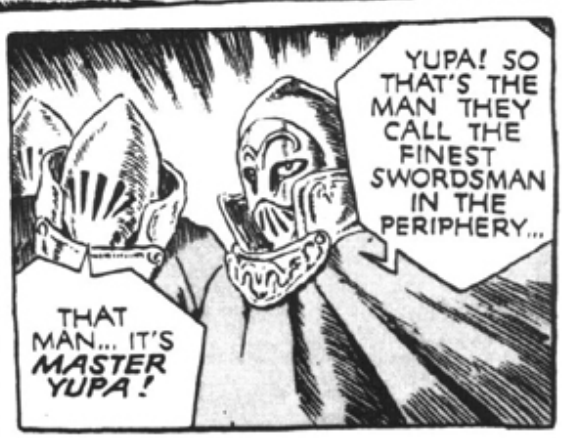

IT'S A DUEL! SHE FELL FOR THEIR CHALLENGE!

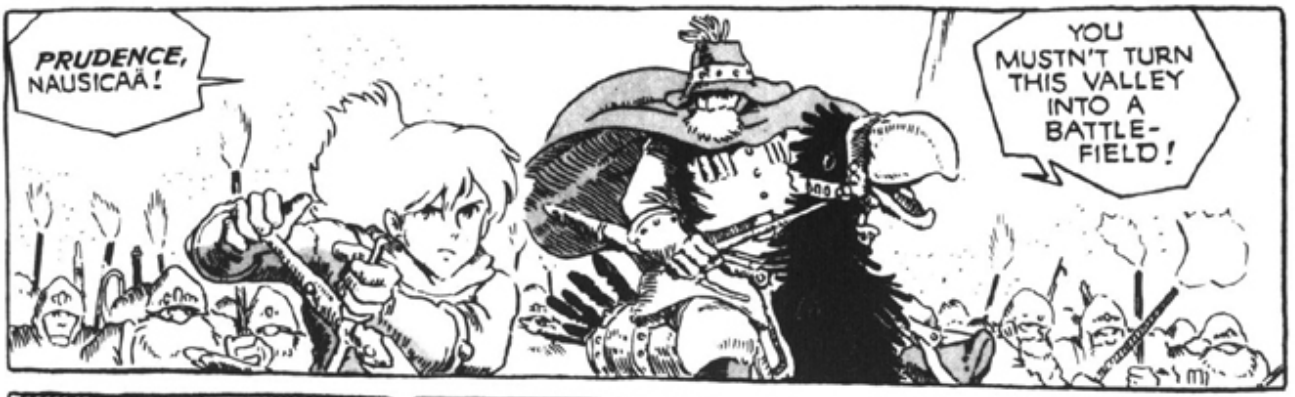
TARGET THE GUN-SHIP!

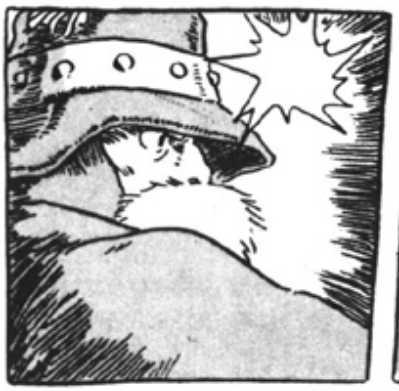

OVER THERE! WHA...?
RMB
RMB

RMB
RMB
RMB

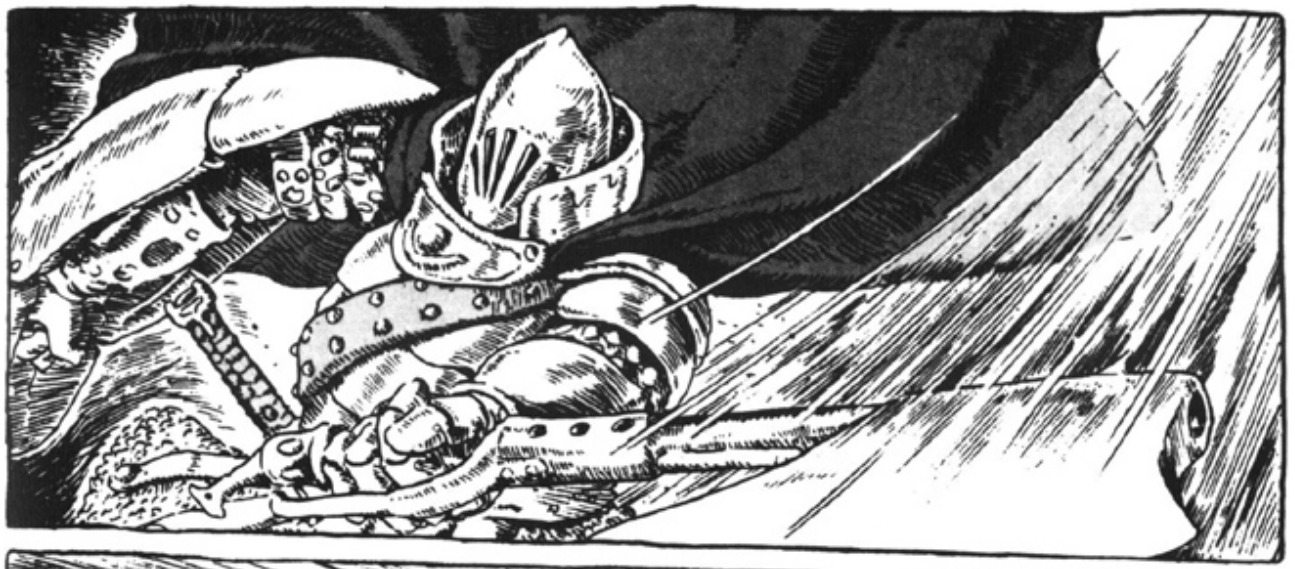
WAIT! DUELLISTS, HOLD YOUR SWORDS!


YUPA! SO THAT'S THE MAN THEY CALL THE FINEST SWORDSMAN IN THE PERIPHERY...
THAT MAN... IT'S MASTER YUPA!


PRUDENCE, NAUSICAÄ!
YOU MUSTN'T TURN THIS VALLEY INTO A BATTLE-FIELD!

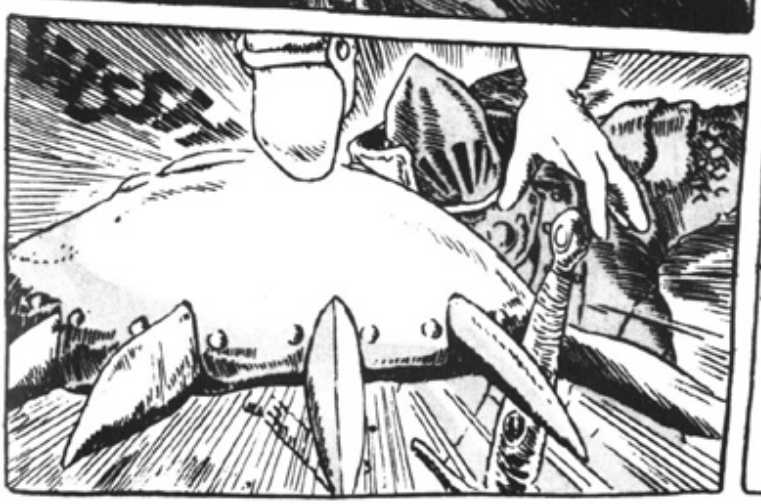


CAN THIS REALLY BE MY NAUSICAÄ?
SHE HAS FORGOTTEN HERSELF IN HER ANGER, LIKE AN OHMU CONSUMED WITH RAGE...



CHNK

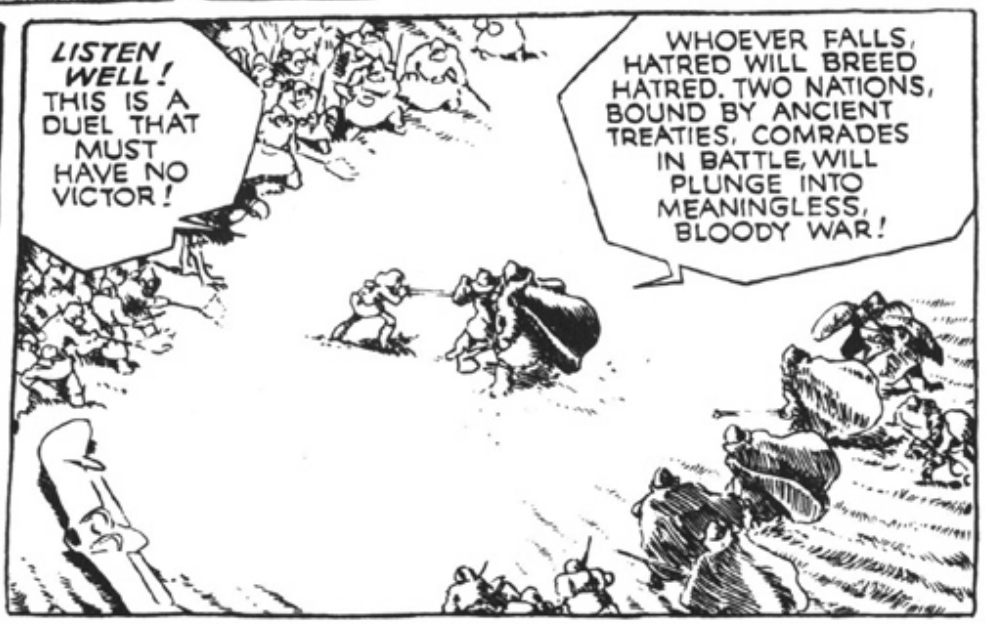
KA-G



KAA!
NGRAA!
heh
NOW!
WHUNGG

DON'T MOVE, EITHER OF YOU!

THIS KNIFE IS CARVED FROM OHMU SHELL-- MOVE, AND IT WILL SLICE THROUGH YOUR CERAMIC ARMOR LIKE PAPER.


LISTEN WELL! THIS IS A DUEL THAT MUST HAVE NO VICTOR!
WHOEVER FALLS, HATRED WILL BREED HATRED. TWO NATIONS, BOUND BY ANCIENT TREATIES, COMRADES IN BATTLE, WILL PLUNGE INTO MEANINGLESS, BLOODY WAR!

TO THE IMPERIAL GUARDS, A QUESTION! HAS THE EMPEROR COMMANDED YOU TO TRAMPLE THE CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE PERIPHERY, AND BRING CIVIL WAR UPON THE ALLIANCE?!

OR WOULD YOU IN YOUR ERROR RISK HONORLESS DEATH IN A DISTANT LAND?!
IF SO, KNOW YOU THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE PERIPHERY WILL FIGHT TO THE DEATH TO DEFEND THEIR PRIDE AND THE RIGHT TO SELF-RULE!

AND YOU LISTEN, TOO, PEOPLE OF THE VALLEY OF WIND!
IF YOUR ADVERSARIES TRESPASS IN IGNORANCE OF THE TABOOS OF THE FOREST, THEN IT IS MADNESS TO RISK THE FUTURE OF THE VALLEY IN RASH ANGER!
NAUSICAÄ ...

YOU'VE FINALLY RETURNED TO YOURSELF...
BLIP BLIP

BUT DON'T LOOSEN YOUR GRIP, NOT UNTIL I'M DONE...

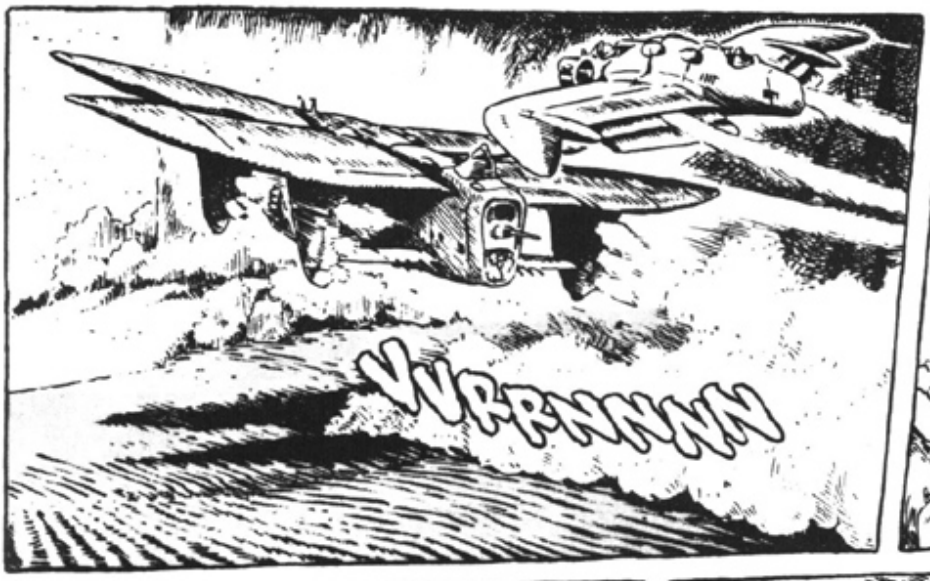
WILL YOU LET THIS DUEL CONTINUE, AND WALK THE PATH TO MUTUAL DESTRUCTION? ANSWER ME!!

HA HA HA
A MAGNIFICENT SPEECH, MASTER YUPA! WE'LL BE FIRST TO SHEATH OUR SWORDS!
SHIK
CARRY THE WOUNDED ABOARD. WE LEAVE AT ONCE.
YES, COMMANDER!
A WOMAN! AND STILL YOUNG!
....
OUR WORMHANDLERS WERE MISTAKEN. FORGIVE US FOR LANDING IN YOUR VALLEY WITHOUT PERMISSION.
NONETHELESS, THAT WAS SPLENDID SWORDSMANSHIP. MAY I SEE YOUR BLADE?
SO THIS IS ONE OF THE OHMU SHELL SWORDS OF WHICH I'VE HEARD RUMORS... IT'S LIGHTER THAN CERAMICS...
Heh heh... IT MUST HAVE BEEN A DEEP WOUND, BUT STILL SHE WIPED OFF ALL THE BLOOD WHEN SHE PULLED IT OUT.
BAKERER
KEN

"NAUSICAÄ," YOU SAY? WILL WE MEET AGAIN?

SOMEDAY, PERHAPS... ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE...

HAH! A FINE ANSWER! FAREWELL!


VVRRNNNN

HURRAH! HURRAH!

THAT SOLDIER WAS ALREADY... DEAD...
I... ....

NAUSICAÄ... YOU SHOULD SAY SOMETHING TO THEM...

PRINCESS! YOU'RE A REAL WARRIOR! I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE ALL OVER AGAIN!
I HAVEN'T HAD SUCH FUN IN A BLUE MOON!
DEFEATING AN ARMORED TROOPER OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD! AYE, THEY'LL BE TELLING THIS TALE FOR MANY A GENERATION!

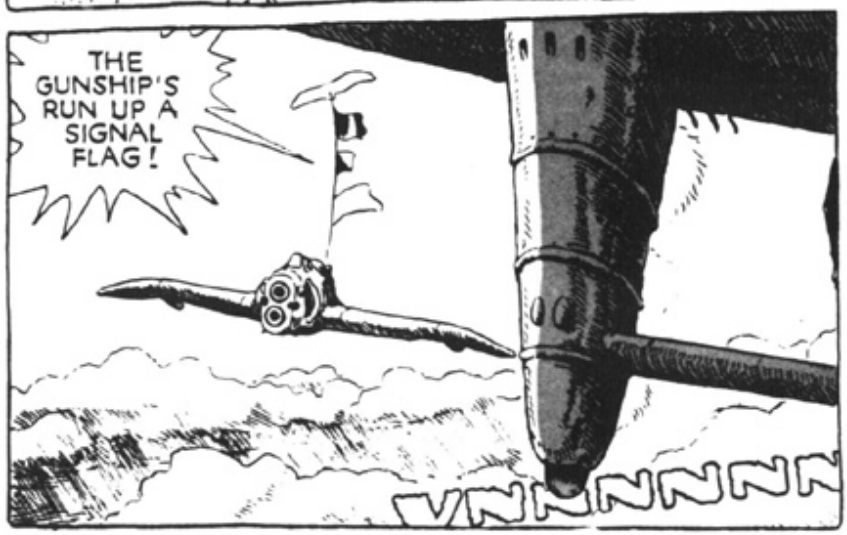
OI! STOP HOLDING THE PRINCESS' HAND! JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
HOLD YOUR TONGUE! I'M ONE OF THE OLD MEN OF THE CASTLE-- THIS IS MY REWARD!

IT WAS A MIGHTY THRUST INDEED! LOOK! MY GLOVES ARE RUINED... IT'S A GOOD THING I WEAR OHMU SHELL GAUNTLETS!
HA HA HA
IT'S AS THEY SAY... YOU DO HAVE NINE LIVES, MASTER YUPA!
HA HA HA

HA HA HA
PRINCESS... THE MEN ARE A LITTLE UNEASY... YOU SHOULD GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO DO...
YES... YOU'RE RIGHT...

ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE... NOW WE HAVE TO CLEAN UP AFTER THE IMPERIAL GUARDS!
FIRST, WE'LL BURN OFF THE ENTIRE STRIP DOWN-WIND OF HERE. SOME OF THE SPORES MUST HAVE REACHED THE WOODS-- DON'T MISS A SINGLE ONE! GET EVERYONE IN THE VALLEY TO HELP.

MASTER YUPA... PLEASE LET ME BIND YOUR WOUND.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL JUST RETURN TO THE CASTLE.


THE GUNSHIP'S RUN UP A SIGNAL FLAG!
VNNNNNN

(WE PRAY FOR YOUR SAFE PASSAGE AND SUCCESS IN BATTLE)
VNNNNN

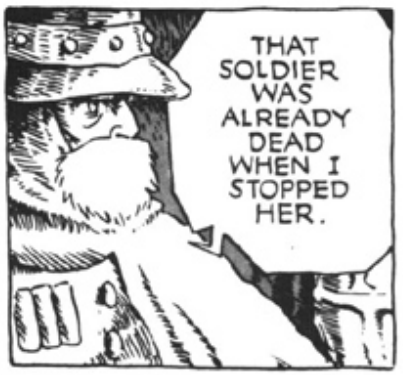
HUH! THEY'RE TREATING AN ARMORED CORVETTE OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD AS EQUALS! HOW SHOULD WE REPLY?
VNNNNNNN
Oh, "HEARTFELT PRAYERS FOR THE PROSPERITY OF YOUR VALLEY," OR SOME SUCH NONSENSE.

THE GUN-SHIP IS TURNING BACK!

Heh... I'LL SEE THAT SHIP IS UNDER MY COMMAND, AT THE FRONT...

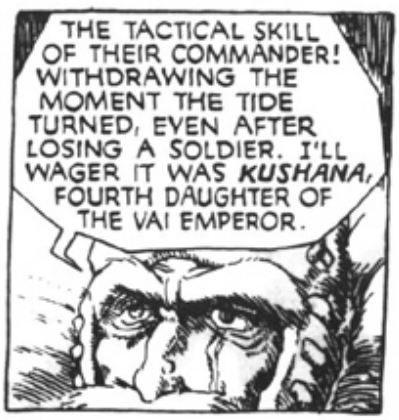
KVAK
SNAP
KVAK

SORRY TO PUT YOU TO THIS TROUBLE, GRANDAM ...
BUT WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT SHE COULD PIERCE MY GAUNTLETS?
ANYONE BUT *YOU* WOULD HAVE LOST THEIR HAND, YUPA. NOW THEN, I DON'T WANT YOU USING THIS ARM UNTIL THE NEW MOON, HEAR?


THAT SOLDIER WAS ALREADY DEAD WHEN I STOPPED HER.

I HAVE TO THANK YOU, YUPA. SHE WAS A FOOL TO CHALLENGE THEM ALONE. SHE SHOULD BE DEAD NOW, HERSELF.
THE ENEMY WAS A SMALL UNIT, OPERATING ALONE. WE SHOULD HAVE USED THE GUNSHIP AND KILLED THEM ALL. WE COULD THEN HAVE HIDDEN THE EVIDENCE...

RATHER THAT, THAN TO SOW THE SEEDS OF FUTURE TROUBLE.


THE TACTICAL SKILL OF THEIR COMMANDER! WITHDRAWING THE MOMENT THE TIDE TURNED, EVEN AFTER LOSING A SOLDIER. I'LL WAGER IT WAS *KUSHANA*, FOURTH DAUGHTER OF THE VAI EMPEROR.

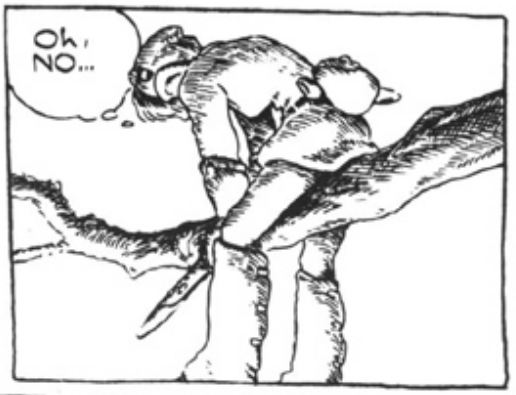
NAUSICAÄ HAS FINALLY AWOKEN TO HER OWN FEARSOME POTENTIAL.

IF WE WEREN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO DESTROY THEM, WE SHOULD HAVE GIVEN THEM THAT STONE...
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, JHIL... AND YET...

SHE WAS SHAKING... TERRIFIED OF THE UNCONTROLLABLE FORCES SHE HAS GLIMPSED WITHIN HERSELF...

PRINCESS! UP HERE... IN THIS HOLLOW!
I CAN'T UNDER-STAND IT. WE CHECKED HERE BEFORE...
IT'S BREAD-FUNGUS... AND THE ROOTS HAVE ALREADY WORKED THEIR WAY IN.
IF WE BURNED OUT THE FUNGUS RIGHT NOW, COULDN'T WE SAVE IT?
WAIT... LET ME ASK THE TREE.
HOW COULD WE HAVE MISSED IT?! THIS IS THE OLDEST TREE IN THE VALLEY!
QUIET! THE PRINCESS IS CHECKING!
IT'S UP TO HER NOW...
.....
.....
NO! IT COULDN'T BE ALL THE WAY OUT HERE!
B... BLOOD!

JUST... JUST DON'T THINK ABOUT IT!
CHUK


Oh, NO...

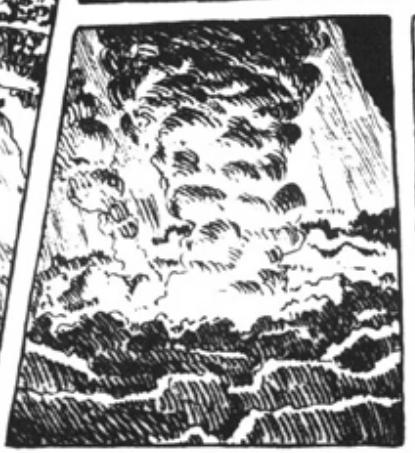
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO? HOLLOW OUT THE TRUNK... SOME-THING...
IT'S PROTECTED THE VALLEY'S WATER SUPPLY FOR FIVE HUNDRED YEARS ...A TREASURE FOR ALL OF US...

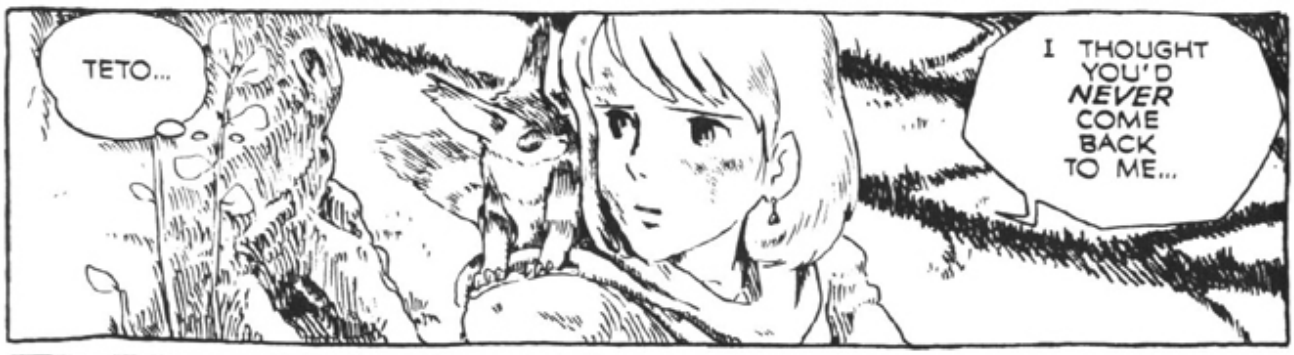
THE FUNGUS HAS SPREAD THROUGHOUT EVERY LIMB.
IT'S AN OLD TREE... IT WAS ALREADY WEAK.

BURN IT... AT DAWN THE FUNGI WILL SPROUT FROM EVERY BRANCH, AND IT WILL START RELEASING THE MIASMA...

.....
.....

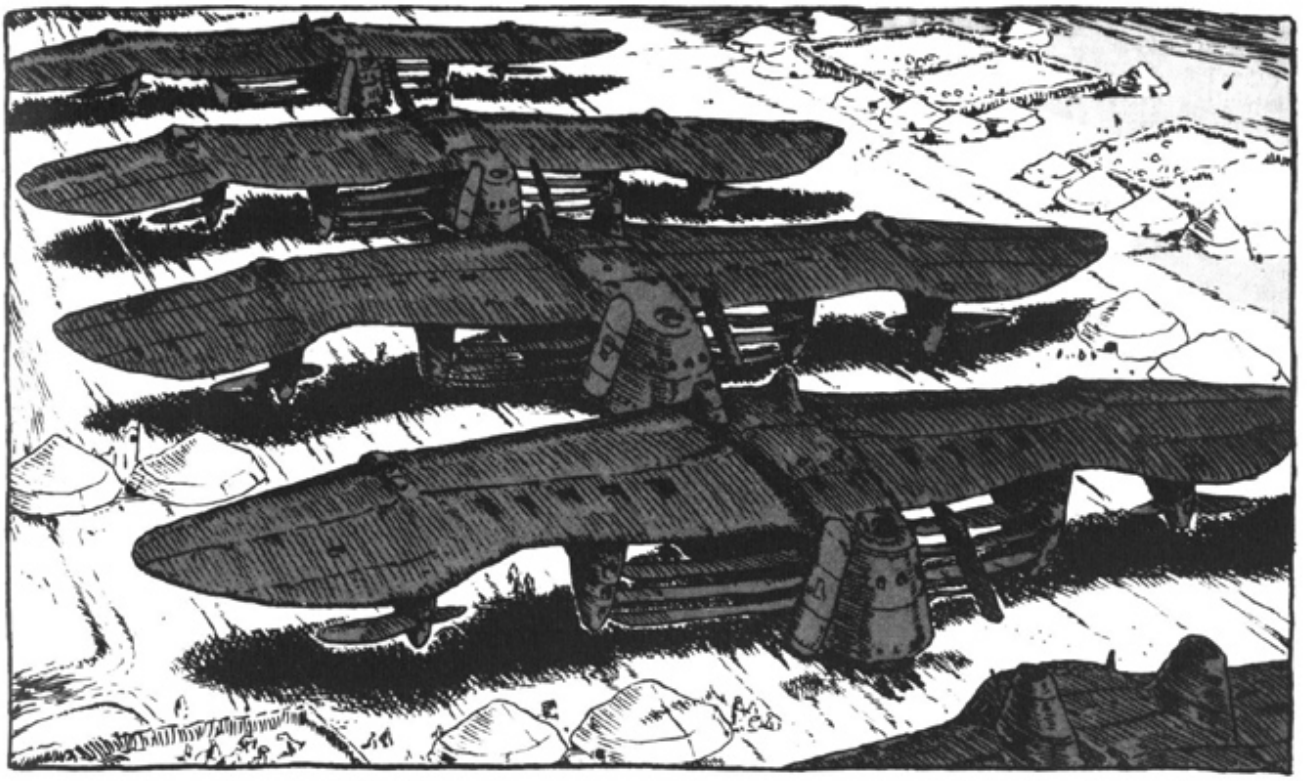
FWOOM
FSSH
KRAK
SNAP
FSSH

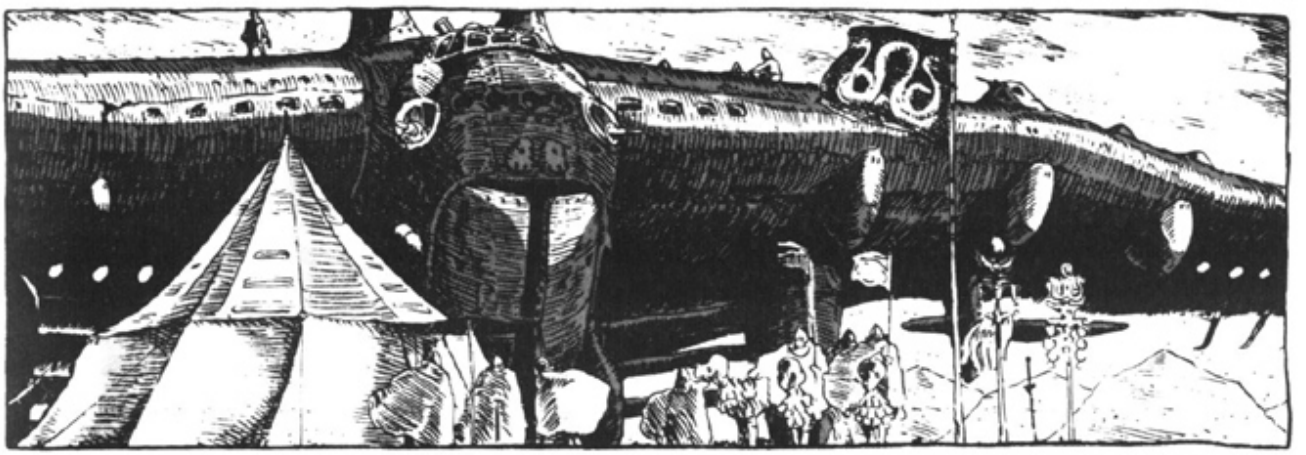



TETO...
I THOUGHT YOU'D *NEVER* COME BACK TO ME...

THANK YOU...

WHY DID I HAVE TO BE BORN A PRINCESS ...?
ON THIS DAY, THE TORUMEKIAN EMPIRE DECLARED WAR ON THE DOROK PRINCIPALITIES.





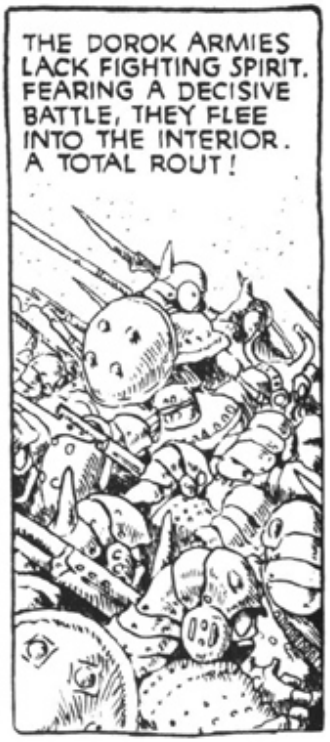
SO... MY PARANOID FATHER HAS INFLICTED ANOTHER MILITARY ATTACHÉ ON ME, HAS HE?
YOU'RE NOT WELCOME HERE, BUT I ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR POSTING. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

I WAS CHOSEN FROM THE MILITARY ACADEMY TO SERVE AS YOUR STAFF OFFICER UNTIL THE END OF THE PERIPHERY CAMPAIGN.
JUST CALL ME *KUROTOWA*, PRINCESS KUSHANA.

MY NEW WATCHDOG, eh? YOU'VE BEEN DEALT A BAD HAND, I'M AFRAID. TELL ME ABOUT THE MAIN FRONT... KUROTOWA.

THE ADVANCE CONTINUES UNHINDERED. THE MAIN FORCES LED BY YOUR THREE EXALTED BROTHERS EXECUTED SURPRISE ATTACKS ON KEY DOROKIAN STRONG-HOLDS, FROM THE SEA. THE ENEMY DEFENSES HAVE BEEN SMASHED ACROSS FIFTY LEAGUES OF FRONT!

AS OF YESTERDAY, SEVEN OF THE DOROK PRINCIPALITIES HAD ALREADY SURRENDERED, AND ELEVEN OF THEIR MULTI-TURRETED CITY-FORTRESSES HAVE FALLEN. THE THREE PRINCES HAVE TAKEN MORE THAN TEN THOUSAND SLAVES.


THE DOROK ARMIES LACK FIGHTING SPIRIT. FEARING A DECISIVE BATTLE, THEY FLEE INTO THE INTERIOR. A TOTAL ROUT!

THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL REJOICES AT EACH NEW VICTORY! THE STREETS RING WITH SONG IN PRAISE OF THE THREE PRINCES! RUMOR SAYS THE SACK OF THE HOLY CITY OF SHUWA IS NO MERE DREAM--

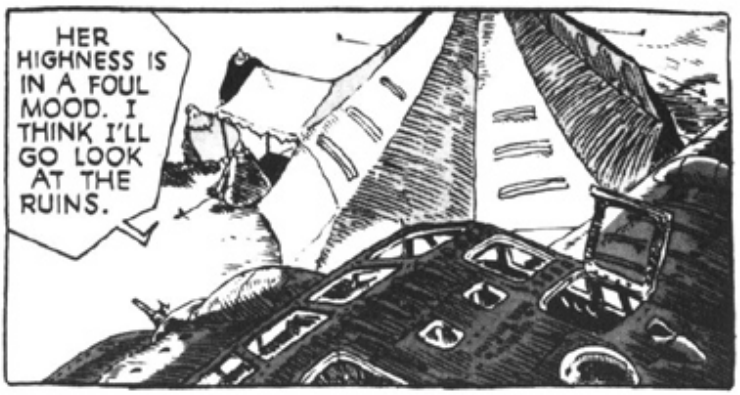
EXCUSE ME ?!
THIS MISERABLE LAND OFFERS NO BRILLIANT BATTLES, NO SLAVES.
THERE'S NOTHING HERE BUT POLLUTED SAND-STORMS AND A ROTTING FOREST CRAWLING WITH FOUL INSECTS...

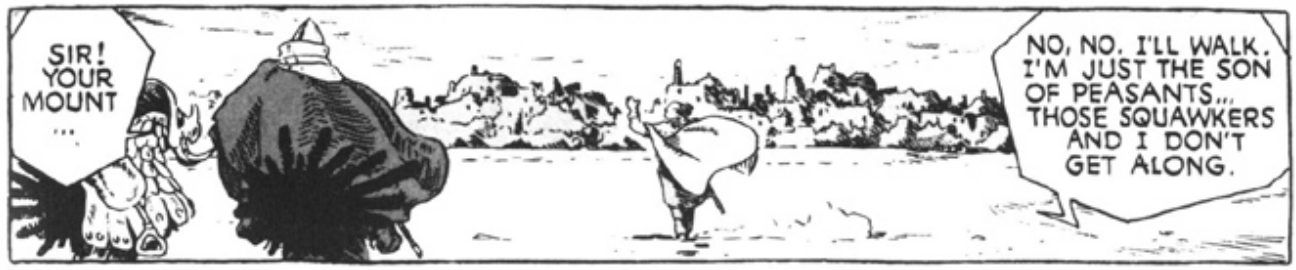
ENOUGH!

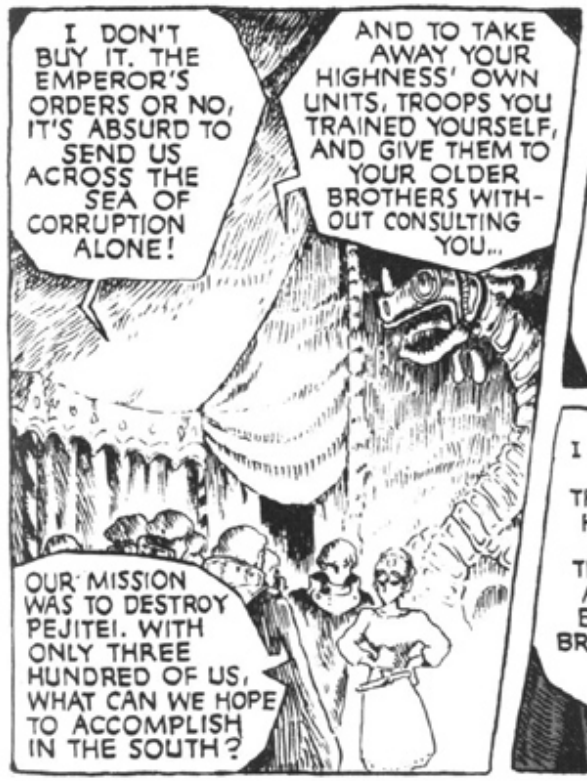
AND WE'RE SUPPOSED TO HEAD SOUTH ACROSS THE SEA OF CORRUPTION AND "THREATEN" THE ENEMY FLANK... *HAH!* THAT'S AS GOOD AN EXCUSE AS ANY FOR SWEEPING ME ASIDE. IN OTHER WORDS, I AM TO *ROT* DOWN HERE UNTIL I FIND THAT STONE...

PERHAPS. YET, HAS NOT THE ILLUSTRIOUS VAI EMPEROR HIMSELF BESTOWED THESE WORDS UPON YOUR HIGHNESS: THAT BRINGING HIM THE STONE WILL SURPASS ANY FEAT IN BATTLE? YOUR HIGHNESS WILL BE ABLE TO ASK ANY HONORS YOU DESIRE...

IF I DON'T HAVE IT, I DON'T HAVE IT.
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH. GET OUT.
YES, COMMANDER!


HER HIGHNESS IS IN A FOUL MOOD. I THINK I'LL GO LOOK AT THE RUINS.


SIR! YOUR MOUNT ...
NO, NO. I'LL WALK. I'M JUST THE SON OF PEASANTS... THOSE SQUAWKERS AND I DON'T GET ALONG.


I DON'T BUY IT. THE EMPEROR'S ORDERS OR NO, IT'S ABSURD TO SEND US ACROSS THE SEA OF CORRUPTION ALONE!
AND TO TAKE AWAY YOUR HIGHNESS' OWN UNITS, TROOPS YOU TRAINED YOURSELF, AND GIVE THEM TO YOUR OLDER BROTHERS WITHOUT CONSULTING YOU...
OUR MISSION WAS TO DESTROY PEJITEI. WITH ONLY THREE HUNDRED OF US, WHAT CAN WE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE SOUTH?

TRUE, BUT WE'VE BEEN GIVEN ALL THE FORCES OF THE PERIPHERY IN EXCHANGE.
THAT RABBLE? THEY'LL KNIFE US IN THE BACK FIRST CHANCE THEY GET! THEY'RE USELESS.

I HESITATE TO SAY THIS, YOUR HIGHNESS, BUT I THINK IT'S A PLOT. BY YOUR BROTHERS...
THEY MUST HAVE TOLD THE EMPEROR THAT YOU'RE DELIBERATELY HIDING THE STONE.

LET US RETURN TO THE CAPITAL. ALL OF US HERE WOULD LAY DOWN OUR LIVES AT YOUR COMMAND. THE REST OF THE ARMY IS JUST THE SAME.

DON'T EVEN SUGGEST IT. I DON'T DOUBT YOUR LOYALTY, BUT SUCH A MOVE WOULD ONLY PLAY INTO MY BROTHERS' HANDS.

AND I WILL ABIDE NO MORE CRITICISM OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY!
SEND A MESSAGE TO ALL THE PERIPHERY TRIBES. WE'LL RENDEZVOUS, AIRBORNE AT NOON TOMORROW. IN THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR, TELL THEM WE GO TO WAR!

Huh! WHAT A WASTE, SMASHING A PEACEFUL CITY OF ARTISANS...

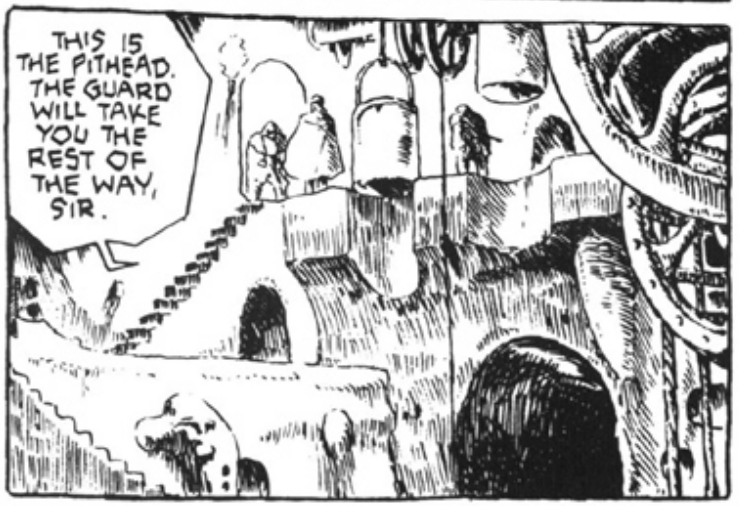
I DOUBT IT'LL EVER BE REBUILT...

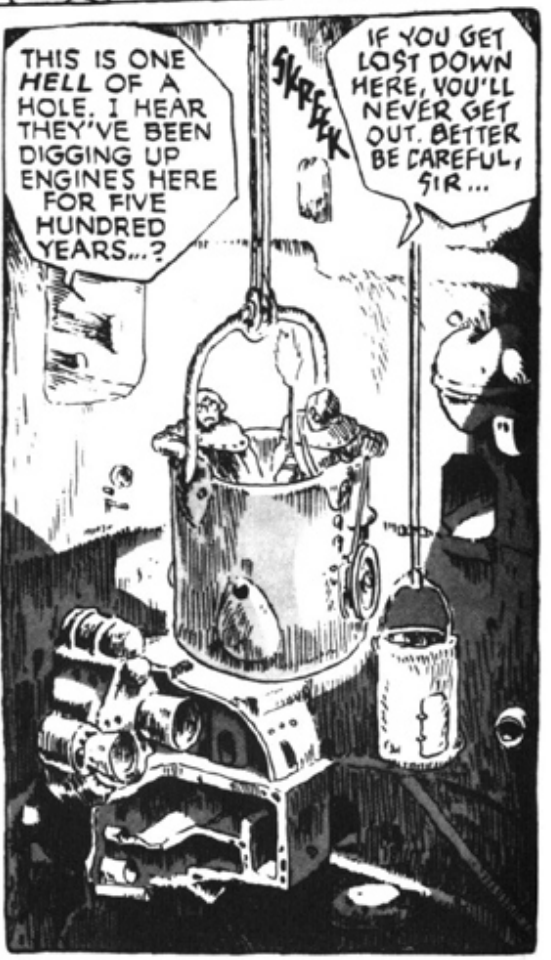
HALT! WHO GOES THERE!

WORMHANDLERS, CAN'T YOU SEE MY HEADSTONE OF AUTHORITY? I'M A STAFF OFFICER, WHERE'S YOUR CHIEF?

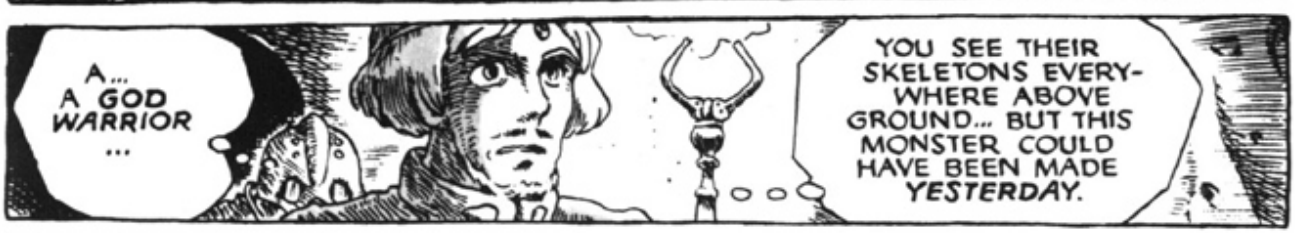
I AM GOWA, LEADER OF THE GUARD, YOUR HONOR.
JUST HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, FELLOW. UHG! YOU FOLK SMELL EVEN WORSE THAN RUMOR SAID. I WANT TO SEE IT. TAKE ME THERE.

SO YOU GET PAID FOR YOUR GUARD DUTY IN PILLAGE?
HUH, HUH... PRINCESS KUSHANA IS A VERY UNDER-STANDING LADY...


THIS IS THE PITHEAD. THE GUARD WILL TAKE YOU THE REST OF THE WAY, SIR.


THIS IS ONE HELL OF A HOLE. I HEAR THEY'VE BEEN DIGGING UP ENGINES HERE FOR FIVE HUNDRED YEARS...?
SKREEK
IF YOU GET LOST DOWN HERE, YOU'LL NEVER GET OUT. BETTER BE CAREFUL, SIR...

POF

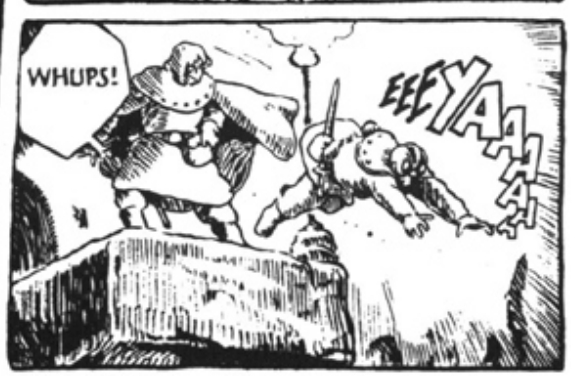

A... A GOD WARRIOR ...
YOU SEE THEIR SKELETONS EVERYWHERE ABOVE GROUND... BUT THIS MONSTER COULD HAVE BEEN MADE YESTERDAY.

KTHMP-THMP

THMP-THMP

ITS HEART IS STILL BEATING... BURIED A THOUSAND YEARS, AND IT'S STILL ALIVE!

SO OUR SPIES WERE RIGHT. THE PEJITEI ENGINEERS TOOK OUT THE CONTROL STONE AND PUT IT TO SLEEP. AFRAID OF NEW DESTRUCTION...


WHUPS!
EEEYAAAAA

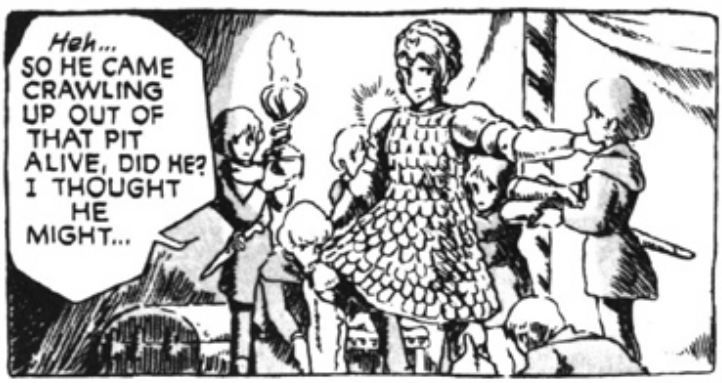
SPLOK

Huh! DEAD, ALL RIGHT.
SO THAT'S WHY KUSHANA'S ADVISORS KEEP HAVING ACCIDENTS... I SUSPECTED AS MUCH.

A GOD WARRIOR... SO THIS IS ONE OF THOSE MONSTERS THAT BURNED THE OLD WORLD TO CINDERS IN SEVEN DAYS? IF I COULD CONTROL IT, EVEN THE THRONE WOULD BE NO DAYDREAM...

SHFFF
HAHAHA! WHAT DOES A POOR SOLDIER OWN BESIDES HIS AMBITION? IS THIS FORTUNE, COME KNOCKING AT LAST? OR IS IT MY DOWNFALL?

IN ANY CASE, ALL THE EMPIRE WILL BE AWASH IN BLOOD. THEY'LL FIGHT EACH OTHER TOOTH AND NAIL, AND ALL BECAUSE OF YOU, MY MONSTER FRIEND.
THMP-THMP
THMP-THMP

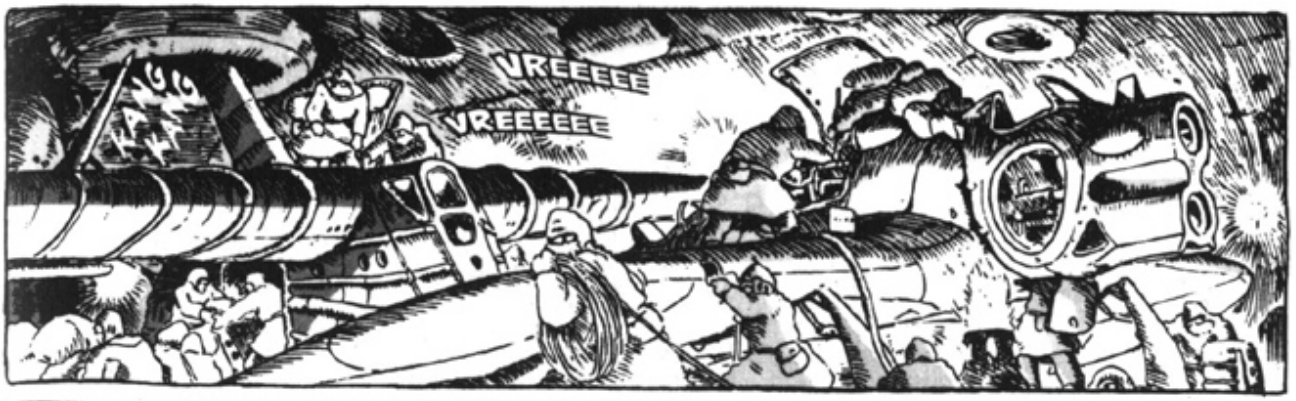

Heh... SO HE CAME CRAWLING UP OUT OF THAT PIT ALIVE, DID HE? I THOUGHT HE MIGHT...

HE WAS PETRIFIED-- SHAKING IN HIS BOOTS.
THAT MAN'S A WORM. HE'S NOBODY TO WORRY YOURSELF ABOUT, COMMANDER.

ISN'T HE? I WONDER ...

MY BROTHERS ARE AS SOFT AND STUPID AS MY FATHER... THAT'S WHY THEY'RE SO GOOD AT THEIR BACK-STABBING PLOTS.
IT'S GOOD I DIDN'T HAVE THE STONE. I THINK I'LL JUST LEAVE IT IN THE VALLEY A WHILE...

THE VALLEY OF WIND


VREEEEE
VREEEEEE

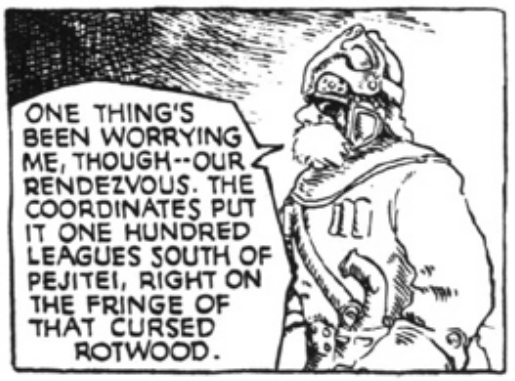
SORRY, MITO, BUT CAN YOU SQUEEZE THE OLD FELLOW ABOARD?
BUT ISN'T THAT YOUR KAI, MASTER YUPA? WHY ARE YOU...?

HE'S MY PRESENT TO NAUSICAÄ ON HER FIRST SORTIE.
HE KNOWS HER WELL. HE'LL STAND HER IN GOOD STEAD ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

GOOD IDEA. HEY, CLEAR SOME SPACE IN THERE!

EVERY-THING'S READY. WE LEAVE AT DAWN.
THE YOUNG MEN COMPLAINED TO JHIL. THEY SAID ALL FIVE OF HER ESCORT ARE OLD MEN FROM THE CASTLE.
AYE, IT'S TRUE. OUR PRINCESS WANTED IT THAT WAY.

THE YOUNG FOLK ARE OUR MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION. OUR POPULATION KEEPS DROPPING, YEAR AFTER YEAR.


ONE THING'S BEEN WORRYING ME, THOUGH--OUR RENDEZVOUS. THE COORDINATES PUT IT ONE HUNDRED LEAGUES SOUTH OF PEJITEI, RIGHT ON THE FRINGE OF THAT CURSED ROTWOOD.

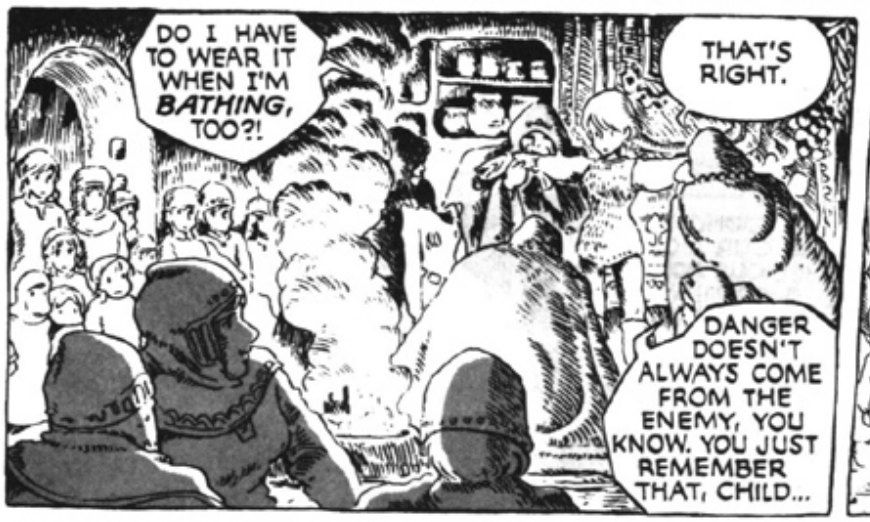
THAT'S THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM THE FRONT... DO THEY MEAN TO CROSS THE SEA OF CORRUPTION...?

IF THEY DO, THEN THIS IS NO MERE BORDER SKIRMISH, I'LL WARRANT.
....
OUR PRINCESS KNOWS, OF COURSE SHE DOES. THAT'S WHY SHE LEFT OUT ALL THOSE YOUNG-STERS.

IT'S ALL OVER, NAUSICAÄ.
THERE. YOU CAN STAND UP NOW, DEAR.

WE OLD WOMEN SEWED THIS ARMOR FOR YOU. WE'VE LAID A SPELL ON EVERY SCALE...
SPELLS TO PROTECT YOU FROM ARROW AND SHELL...

YOU MUSTN'T TAKE IT OFF UNTIL YOU'RE HOME AND SAFE IN THE VALLEY. NOT EVEN WHEN YOU SLEEP, NOW...
REALLY ?!

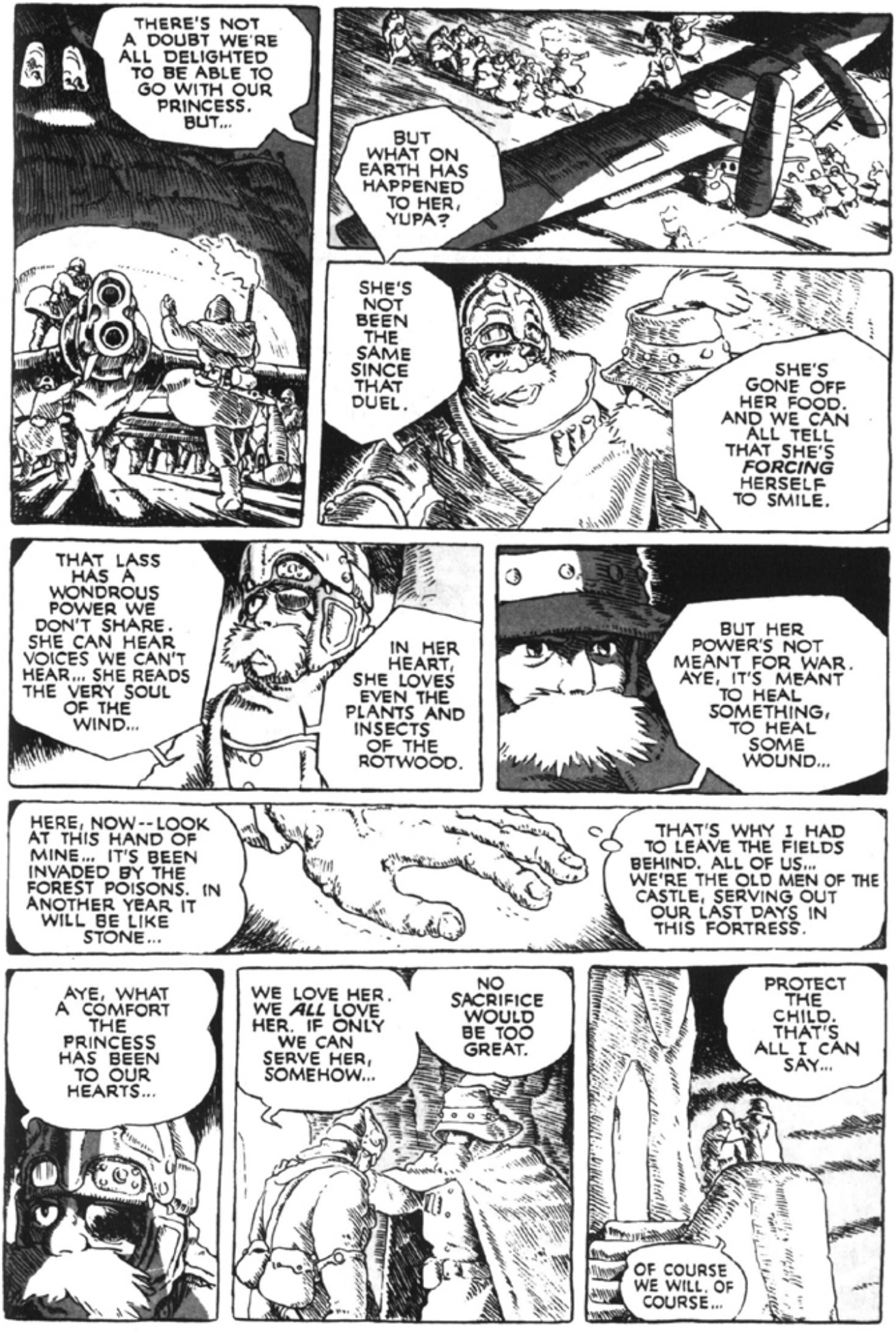

DO I HAVE TO WEAR IT WHEN I'M *BATHING*, TOO?!
THAT'S RIGHT.
DANGER DOESN'T ALWAYS COME FROM THE ENEMY, YOU KNOW. YOU JUST REMEMBER THAT, CHILD...

ALL RIGHT, LITTLE ONES... IT'S YOUR TURN NOW. COME ON IN, CHILDREN.
YES, GRAM.

WE GATHERED ALL THESE FOR YOU, PRINCESS.
PLEASE EAT THEM AND STAY HEALTHY AND STRONG, OKAY?

MY GOODNESS! CHIKO NUTS! AND SO *MANY* OF THEM!

THANK YOU. I'LL TREASURE EVERY ONE OF THEM.
WE'LL PRAY TO THE GOD OF THE WIND *EVERY* DAY!
WE'LL ASK HIM TO SEND GOOD WINDS TO OUR PRINCESS *ALL* THE TIME!


THERE'S NOT A DOUBT WE'RE ALL DELIGHTED TO BE ABLE TO GO WITH OUR PRINCESS. BUT...
BUT WHAT ON EARTH HAS HAPPENED TO HER, YUPA?
SHE'S NOT BEEN THE SAME SINCE THAT DUEL.
SHE'S GONE OFF HER FOOD. AND WE CAN ALL TELL THAT SHE'S *FORCING* HERSELF TO SMILE.
THAT LASS HAS A WONDROUS POWER WE DON'T SHARE. SHE CAN HEAR VOICES WE CAN'T HEAR... SHE READS THE VERY SOUL OF THE WIND...
IN HER HEART, SHE LOVES EVEN THE PLANTS AND INSECTS OF THE ROTWOOD.
BUT HER POWER'S NOT MEANT FOR WAR. AYE, IT'S MEANT TO HEAL SOMETHING, TO HEAL SOME WOUND...
HERE, NOW--LOOK AT THIS HAND OF MINE... IT'S BEEN INVADED BY THE FOREST POISONS. IN ANOTHER YEAR IT WILL BE LIKE STONE...
THAT'S WHY I HAD TO LEAVE THE FIELDS BEHIND. ALL OF US... WE'RE THE OLD MEN OF THE CASTLE, SERVING OUT OUR LAST DAYS IN THIS FORTRESS.
AYE, WHAT A COMFORT THE PRINCESS HAS BEEN TO OUR HEARTS...
WE LOVE HER. WE *ALL* LOVE HER. IF ONLY WE CAN SERVE HER, SOMEHOW...
NO SACRIFICE WOULD BE TOO GREAT.
PROTECT THE CHILD. THAT'S ALL I CAN SAY...
OF COURSE WE WILL. OF COURSE...

KEE!
WHY, IT'S TETO...
WHERE'S YOUR MASTER, TETO? THE NIGHT WILL SOON BE OVER.
THESE ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE CASTLE-- NO ONE EVER COMES DOWN HERE...
.....
.....

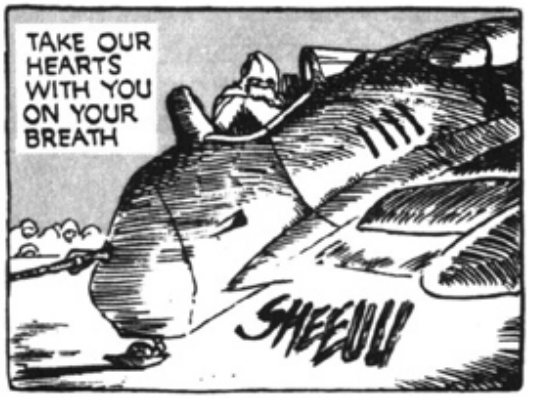
THESE... THESE ARE PLANTS FROM THE SEA OF CORRUPTION!
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING DOWN HERE, NAUSICAÄ?!
I GREW THEM FROM SPORES I COLLECTED IN THE FOREST.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. THEY DON'T GIVE OFF THE MIASMA.
BUT IT'S A SECRET FROM EVERYONE IN THE VALLEY... THEY'D ONLY BE AFRAID.
ISN'T THAT A HISOKUSA ...?
IT'S ONE OF THE MOST POISONOUS PLANTS IN THE FOREST. I NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT COULD FLOWER...
WHEN YOU GIVE IT CLEAN WATER AND AIR, EVEN BREAD-FUNGUS TURNS INTO THIS BEAUTIFUL LITTLE TREE-- AND IT DOESN'T GIVE OFF THE MIASMA, EITHER.
IT'S NOT THEIR FAULT... IT'S THE EARTH ITSELF THAT'S POLLUTED!
YOU DISCOVERED THIS BY YOUR-SELF?!
YES... AS I STUDIED THE FOREST.
BUT I'LL BE CLOSING UP THIS ROOM NOW. I STOPPED THE WATER A FEW MINUTES AGO. IN A WHILE, THEY'LL ALL WITHER AND DIE...

Oh, YUPA! I DON'T WANT TO GO TO WAR!
.....
.....
THERE'S A TERRIBLE HATRED HIDING INSIDE OF ME. I WON'T BE ABLE TO CONTROL IT ANYMORE...
I CAN UNDER-STAND NOW HOW OHMU FEELS...
THE HATE TAKES OVER AND MAKES HIM KILL, AND THEN HE CRIES.
THE... THE SKY'S GETTING LIGHT... I HAVE TO GO.
WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! I'VE SPENT HALF MY LIFE SEARCHING FOR THE KEY TO THE MYSTERY OF THE FOREST-- AND I NEVER SAW THAT IT WAS INSIDE THIS GIRL, RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES.
NAUSICAÄ!
WHATEVER HAPPENS, RETURN TO US! THE TIME IS DRAWING NIGH WHEN ALL THE WORLD WILL HAVE NEED OF YOUR POWER!
VVUNN
VVUNN

BOW COCK-PIT READY!
STERN COCKPIT READY!

BARGE READY!

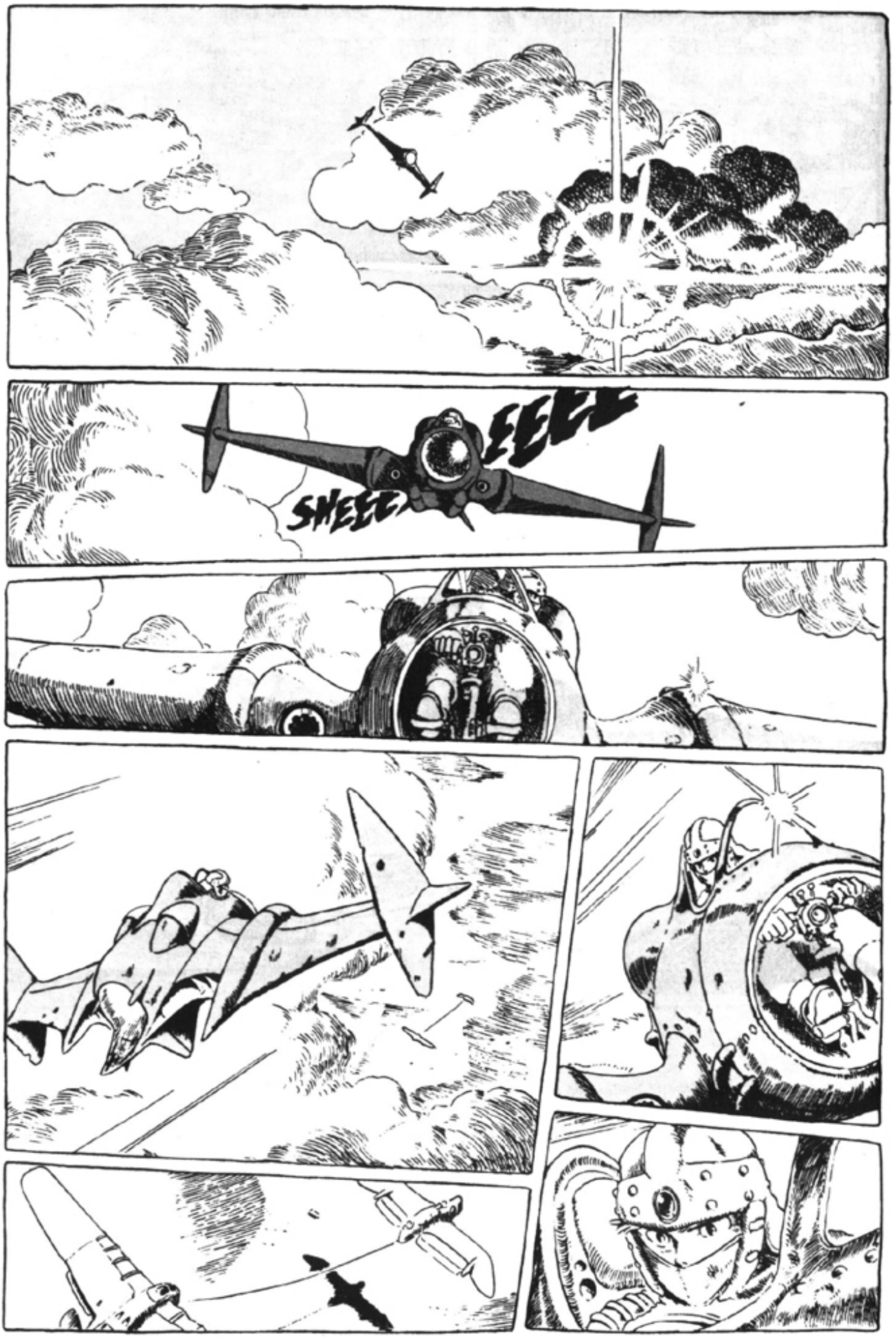
Oh, WIND... WIND OF THE DAWN WIND THAT CARRIES OUR CHILDREN AWAY


TAKE OUR HEARTS WITH YOU ON YOUR BREATH
SHEEUU

TO GUIDE OUR CHILDREN SAFELY TO THIS VALLEY ON THE LONG RETURN FROM WAR
VOM

SHEEUUUU

ON THIS DAY, WITH THE FIRST RAYS OF DAWN, THE SOLDIERS OF THE PERIPHERY TRIBES TOOK TO THE AIR FROM THEIR KINGDOMS ALONG THE EDGE OF THE SEA OF CORRUPTION, BOUND FOR AN AERIAL RENDEZVOUS WITH THE ARMED MIGHT OF THE TORUMEKIAN EMPIRE.


SHEEE
EEEE

THERE'S A SHIP AGAINST THE SUN... A GUN-SHIP.
IT WENT INTO THE CLOUDS.
I WONDER WHERE IT'S FROM? IT SHOULDN'T BE OFF BY ITSELF IF IT'S GOING TO THE RENDEZ-VOUS...
I ONLY CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF IT, BUT THAT SILHOUETTE ...
NO... IT COULDN'T BE...
HEY! HEY, MITO!
HEY, TELL THE PRINCESS! TELL HER EVERYONE OVER HERE IS JUS' GREAT!
WHAT IS IT?
ISH, ISH LIKE WE'RE ALL YOUNG LADDIES AGAIN!
heh heh
SO, WE'RE GONNA SHING A SONG! BRACE YOURSELVES!
Huh! WHAT A BUNCH ...
DRUNK AS LORDS ...

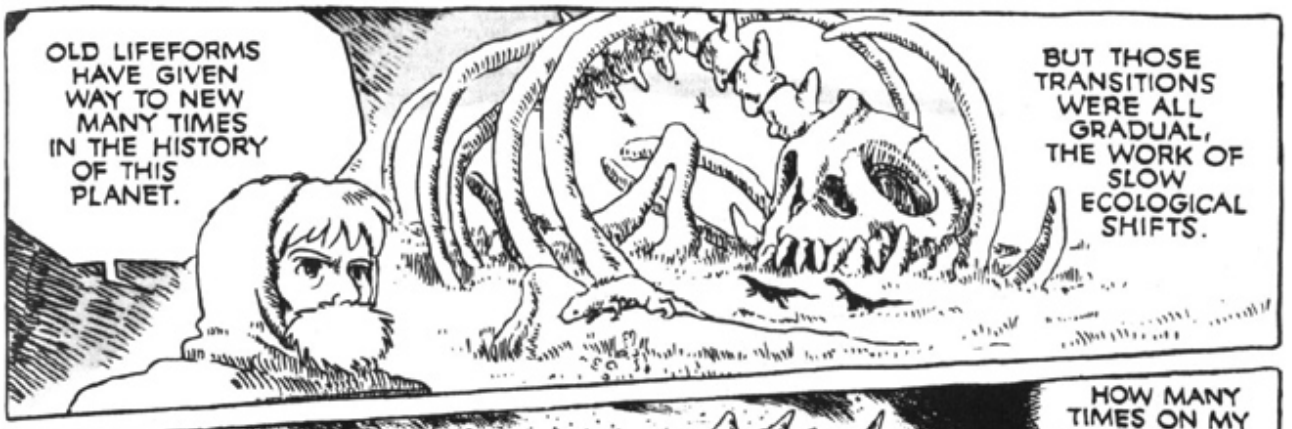
PACKED UP LIKE SAR-DINES IN A COF-FIN ON A STRING!
BUT-LETS AND RATIONS A YOUNG MAN'S BRIGHT SPRING!
OH THAT PRETTY LASSIE AND OUR FINAL PAR-TING ...
SQUAWK
Wha ha ha
OI! ENOUGH OF THAT! THIS IS THE PRINCESS' FIRST SORTIE!
BY THE GODS, I'LL CUT THE WIRE AND LEAVE THE LOT OF YOU BEHIND!
MITO! HOW ARE YOU GONNA FIGHT WITHOUT FOOD AND BULLETS, eh?
HAHAHA
har har
YA! CUT IT IF YOU CAN! LET'S SEE YOU DO IT!
Oh, IT'S OKAY, UNCLE MITO.
AFTER ALL, IT'S THEIR LAST CHANCE ...
...TO BREATHE CLEAN AIR WITHOUT A MASK.
WHEN WE PUT THEM ON THIS TIME, WHO KNOWS WHEN WE'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE THEM OFF AGAIN...
BOROROROROO
THERE'S A SHIP IN THE CLOUDS! THEY'RE RUNNING ALONG-SIDE US!

BORORO
HERE THEY COME... IT'S AN OLD BRIG!
THAT'S THE "OLD SOLDIER" FROM PAGASE-- SHE'S TWO HUNDRED YEARS OLD, IF SHE'S A DAY...
I'VE HEARD ABOUT HER... THE OLDEST SHIP ON THE PERIPHERY.
SHE'S ALL PATCHWORK... ALMOST NOTHING LEFT OF HER ORIGINAL HULL. PAGASE... OUR OLD COMRADES IN ARMS.
YoAAA!
JHIL OF THE VALLEY!
GOOD FLIGHT SO FAR?
KNK-KNK
SSSHH
Eh? THAT'S NOT JHIL...
SO... HE'S FINALLY TURNED HIS WEAPONS OVER TO HIS SON.
WAIT A MINUTE ...
JHIL DOESN'T HAVE A SON!

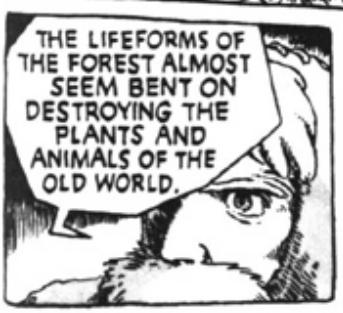
BY THE GODS! IT'S JHIL'S DAUGHTER!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! A WOMAN GUNSHIP PILOT! THERE'S NEVER BEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE GAPING! FULL SPEED AHEAD! WE'LL FLY FORMATION WITH THE VALLEY GUNSHIP!
SHIPS AHEAD! A WHOLE FLEET!
IT'S A PERIPHERY CONVOY... THEY'RE ALL HEADED FOR THE RENDEZVOUS.
ALL THOSE GUN-SHIPS...
SO MANY SHIPS STILL ABLE TO FLY... EVEN OUT HERE BY THE FOREST...
(VALLEY OF THE WIND... A TOAST TO OUR REUNION!)
(I AM NAUSICAÄ, CHILD OF JHIL OF THE VALLEY OF WIND!)
(WELCOME! JOIN THE FORMA-TION!)

WE'VE REACHED THE RENDEZ-VOUS POINT!
TEN MORE MINUTES TO THE DESIGNATED HOUR!
I SEE... ONE OF THE ANCIENT CITIES. A GOOD LAND-MARK...
UH-oh! FORGOT MY MASK!
Eh? YOUR HIGHNESS? SHOULDN'T YOU BE WEARING YOUR MASK?
THE MIASMA SHOULDN'T REACH THIS HIGH. WE DON'T NEED THEM AS LONG AS THAT BIRD'S ALIVE.
HA HA! THAT'S A RELIEF! I HATE THOSE THINGS.
BY THE WAY, ONCE THEY GET HERE WE'LL NEED A PLACE TO LAND.
WE'RE NOT LANDING. WE'LL HEAD STRAIGHT SOUTH ACROSS THE SEA OF CORRUPTION.
LIKE THIS...?! B-BUT, TO FLY OVER THE ROTWOOD WITHOUT EVEN PUTTING THE TROOPS IN ORDER...
DO YOU THINK THAT WILL ALARM THE PERIPHERY TRIBES?
Heh, heh... OF COURSE IT WILL. SO WE KEEP GOING NOW, WHILE THEY'RE STILL TIED TO THEIR BARGES.

OUR TRANSPORTS ARE NO MATCH FOR THEIR GUN-SHIPS. IF WE TELL THEM WHAT WE'RE PLANNING AHEAD OF TIME, WE'LL HAVE A REBELLION ON OUR HANDS.
PERIPHERY CONVOY AT FIVE O'CLOCK! VISUAL CONTACT!
RUN UP THE PILOT FLAGS!
SO... SHACKLE THE GUNSHIPS AND DRAG THEM ALONG BEHIND YOU. BRAINS AND BEAUTY BOTH... YOU'RE QUITE A WOMAN, KUSHANA...
JHIL... I'VE COME TO TAKE MY LEAVE...
MM... I KNEW YOU WOULD. BACK TO THE FOREST, I SUPPOSE.
I THINK I'VE FINALLY FOUND WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR ALL THESE YEARS.
I INTEND TO KEEP GOING AS LONG AS THIS BODY WILL LET ME.
IS IT THIS... "KEY" TO THE MYSTERY OF THE FOREST YOU KEEP TALKING ABOUT?
YES...
THE SEA OF CORRUPTION IS CLEARLY SPREADING. IN JUST THE PAST FEW YEARS IT'S SWALLOWED UP THREE ENTIRE COUNTRIES IN THE SOUTH.
AT THIS RATE, THE WHOLE CONTINENT WILL BE BENEATH THE FOREST INSIDE OF A CENTURY.
OUR POPULATIONS ARE SHRINKING, NOT JUST ON THE PERIPHERY, BUT EVEN IN THE CITIES OF TORUMEKIA. MANY CHILDREN DIE BEFORE THEY REACH ADULTHOOD...

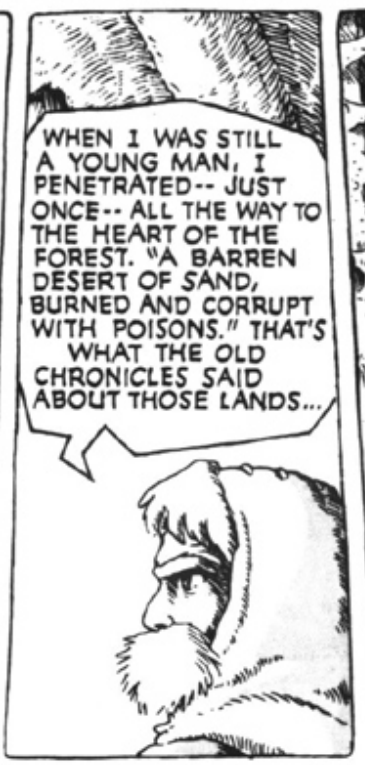

OLD LIFEFORMS HAVE GIVEN WAY TO NEW MANY TIMES IN THE HISTORY OF THIS PLANET.
BUT THOSE TRANSITIONS WERE ALL GRADUAL, THE WORK OF SLOW ECOLOGICAL SHIFTS.

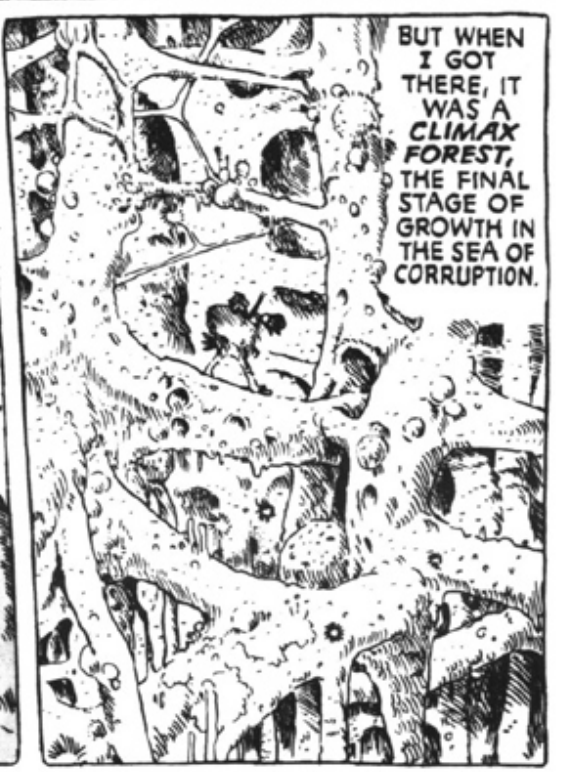
THE PLANTS AND INSECTS OF THE SEA OF CORRUPTION ARE DIFFERENT ...
HOW MANY TIMES ON MY TRAVELS HAVE I SEEN HERDS OF OHMU, CRAZED FOR REVENGE, SCATTERING CLOUDS OF SPORES AS THEY ATTACKED HUMAN VILLAGES?


THE LIFEFORMS OF THE FOREST ALMOST SEEM BENT ON DESTROYING THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS OF THE OLD WORLD.

THE PRIESTS OF TORUMEKIA SAY IT'S THE WRATH OF HEAVEN--GOD'S PUNISHMENT FOR OUR POLLUTION OF THE WORLD DURING THE SEVEN DAYS OF FIRE.
BUT CAN THAT REALLY BE SO...?

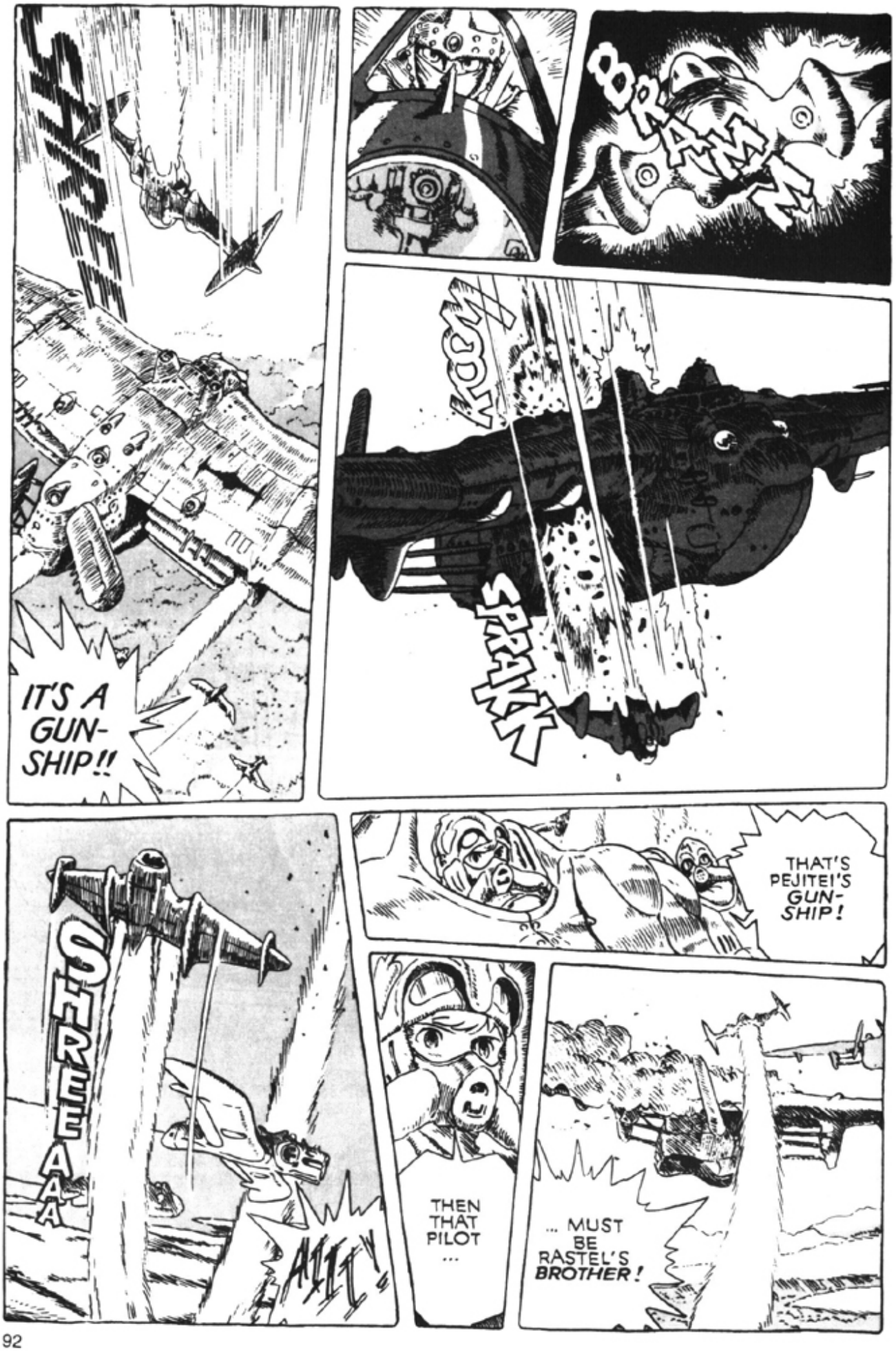
IF THE FOREST IS GOD'S PUNISHMENT FOR MAN'S POLLUTION OF OUR WORLD, THEN WHAT REASON IS THERE TO DESTROY THE PLANTS AND BIRDS? THEY'VE BEEN HERE FAR LONGER THAN WE.

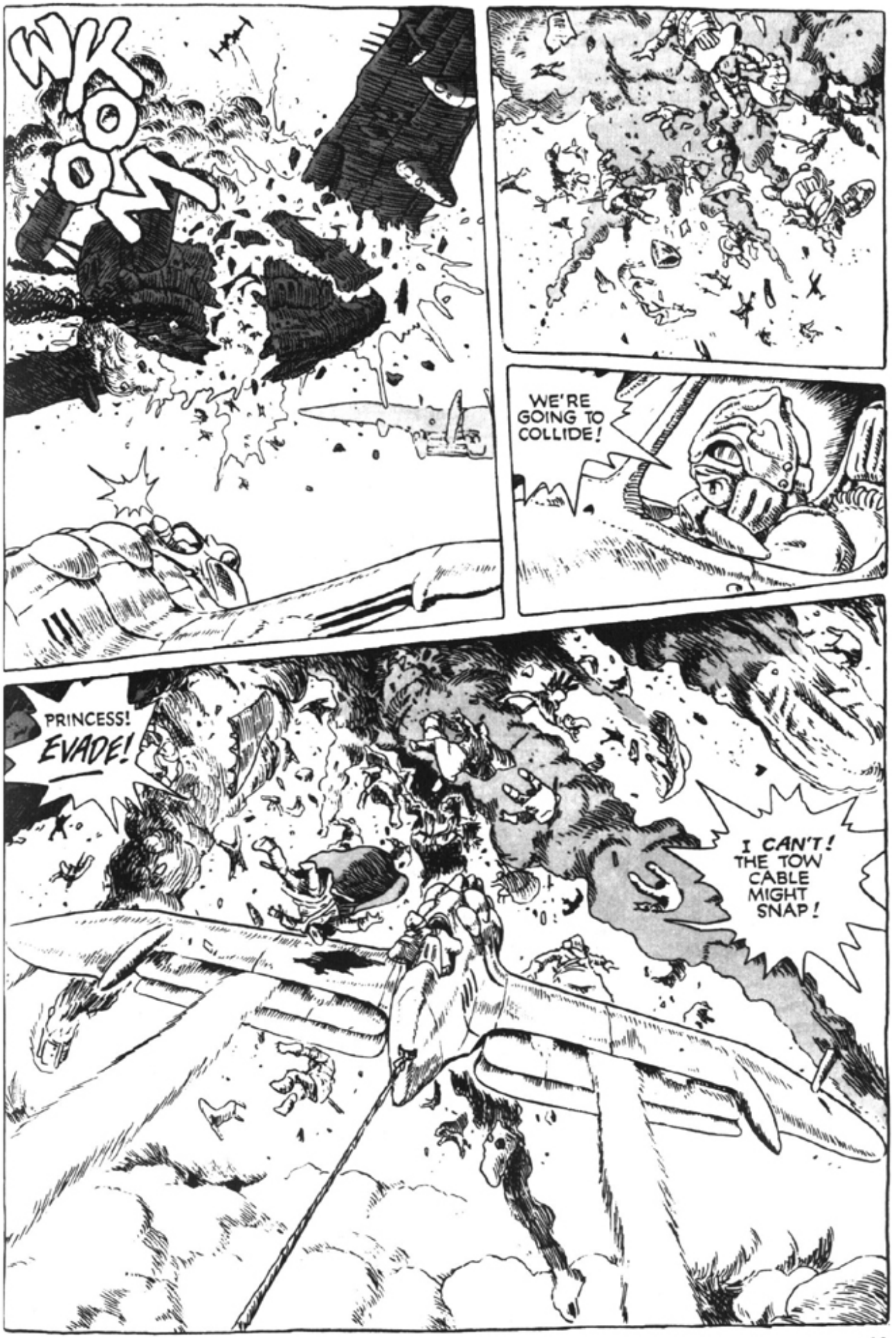

WHEN I WAS STILL A YOUNG MAN, I PENETRATED-- JUST ONCE-- ALL THE WAY TO THE HEART OF THE FOREST. "A BARREN DESERT OF SAND, BURNED AND CORRUPT WITH POISONS." THAT'S WHAT THE OLD CHRONICLES SAID ABOUT THOSE LANDS...


BUT WHEN I GOT THERE, IT WAS A CLIMAX FOREST, THE FINAL STAGE OF GROWTH IN THE SEA OF CORRUPTION.

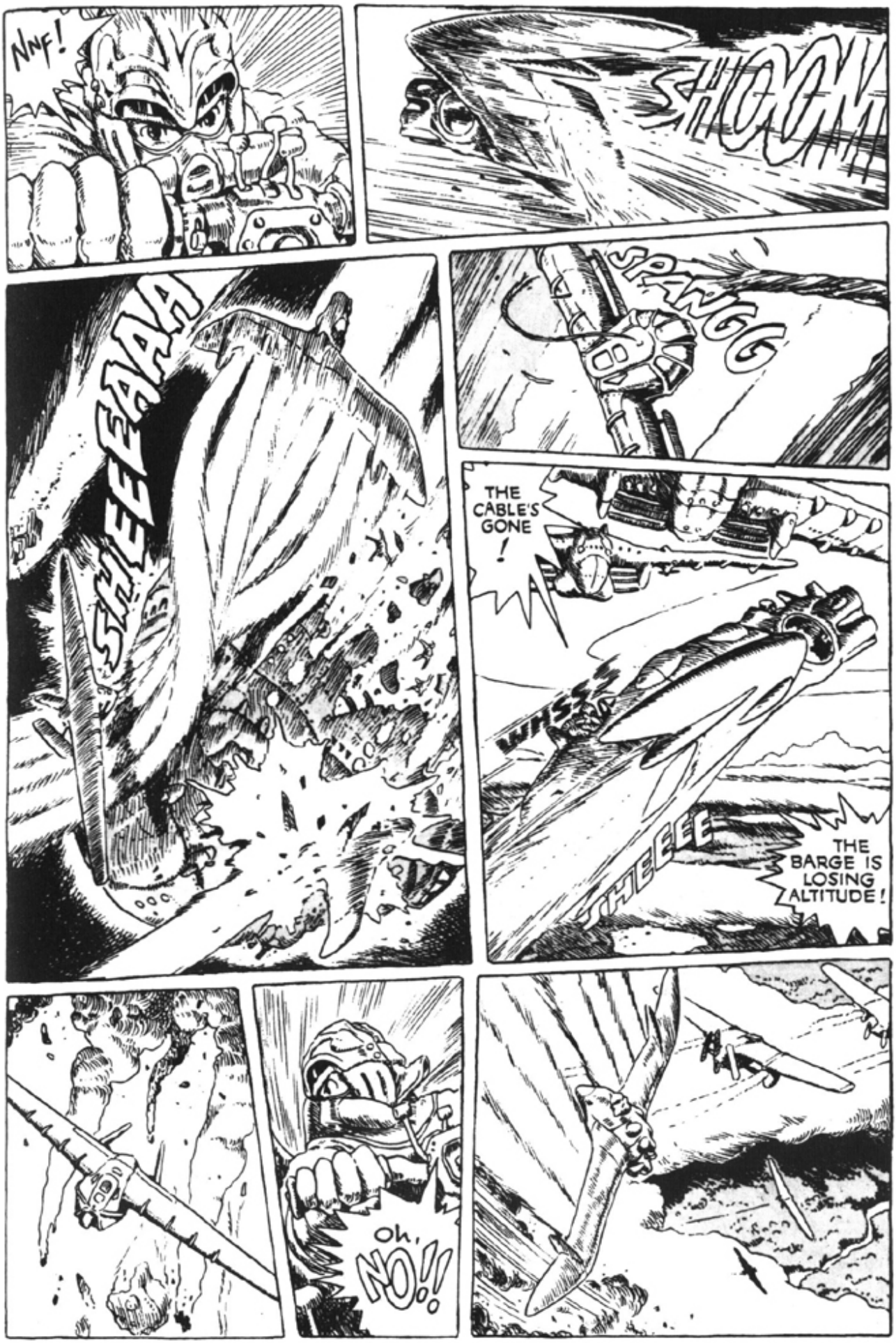
THAT'S WHERE I GOT THIS SAND.
WHAT I FOUND WAS A WORLD OF PEACE AND PURITY...
EACH GRAIN IS A COMPLEX ALLOY OF METALS. I DOUBT OUR FORGES AND CHEMICALS COULD MELT IT...
AND THEY'RE COMPLETELY FREE OF POISON.
SO PURE I FELT LIKE A MONSTER IN MY MASK AND CLUMSY GARMENTS...
SO YOU THINK THE SEA OF CORRUPTION WAS BORN TO CLEANSE THIS POLLUTED WORLD?
IT'S JUST A HYPOTHESIS...
BUT NAUSICAÄ HAS FELT IT TOO, INSTINCTIVELY...
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HEART OF THE FOREST? OUT WHERE THE TREES ARE ONE HUNDRED MERUTES HIGH AND MORE? I MEAN TO FIND OUT...
YUPA, MY FRIEND... YOU MUST DO AS YOU BELIEVE IS RIGHT. I DOUBT WE WILL MEET AGAIN IN THIS WORLD...
HOW GLAD I WILL BE IF NAUSICAÄ CAN HELP YOU IN YOUR QUEST...
VNNNNNNNN

I'VE NEVER GONE SO FAR INTO THE FOREST ...
WHAT IS THIS STRANGE FEELING? MY HEART IS POUNDING... THE AIR IS FILLED WITH HATE...
BUT IT'S NOT THE VOICE OF *OHMU*...
PRINCESS!
THE MEN IN THE BARGE WANT TO KNOW IF THEY CAN TAKE THEIR MASKS OFF?
THEY SAY ALL THE OTHER CREWS ARE DOING IT.
TELL THEM TO BE PATIENT. SOMETHING WORRIES ME...
VNNN
THOSE TORUMEKIAN *BUMBLECROWS* ARE SLOW ENOUGH TO DRIVE A MAN MAD.
AND ON TOP OF THAT THEY'VE MANNED THEIR TURRETS. TRYING TO INTIMIDATE US! THIS WHOLE MISSION'S A FLIGHT OF FOOLS...
THERE'S SOME-THING IN THE SUN!

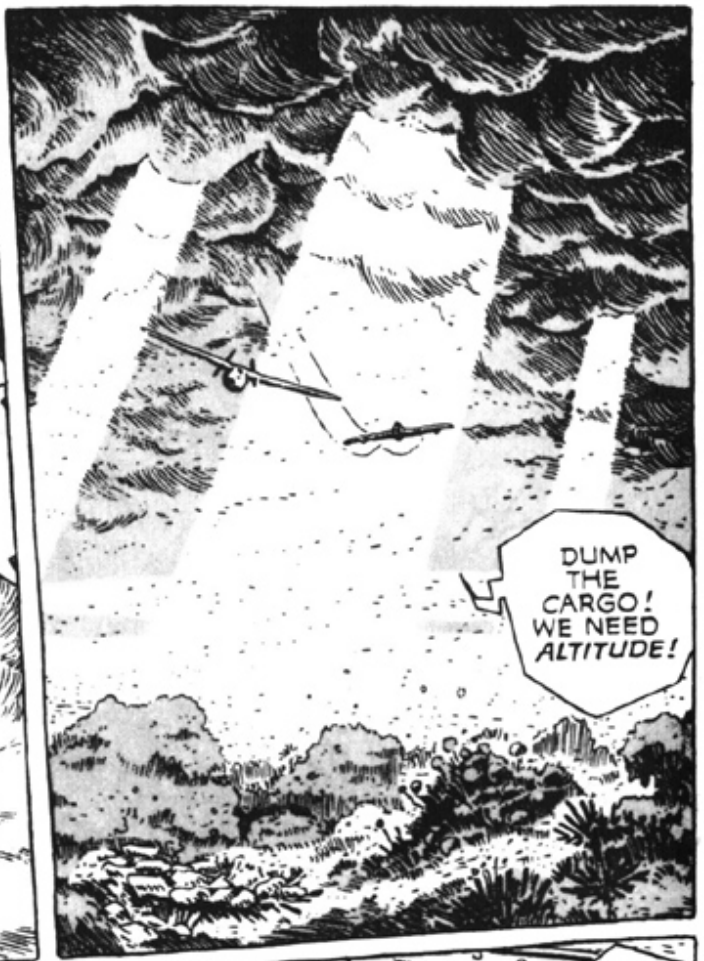

BRAMM
KOOM
SPRAKK
IT'S A GUN-SHIP!!
THAT'S PEJITEI'S GUN-SHIP!
... MUST BE RASTEL'S BROTHER!
THEN THAT PILOT ...
SHREEAAA
AIII!


WKOOM
WE'RE GOING TO COLLIDE!
PRINCESS! EVADE!
I CAN'T! THE TOW CABLE MIGHT SNAP!

BISH
SKCH
BAKK
SPAK
MITO! IS THE BARGE ALL RIGHT?!
IT'S THE BOW OF THAT BUMBLE-CROW!
SOME-HOW IT...
PRINCESS! LOOK OUT!


NNF!
SHOOM
SPANGG
SHEEEAAA
THE CABLE'S GONE!
WHSS
SHEEEE
THE BARGE IS LOSING ALTITUDE!
Oh, NO!!

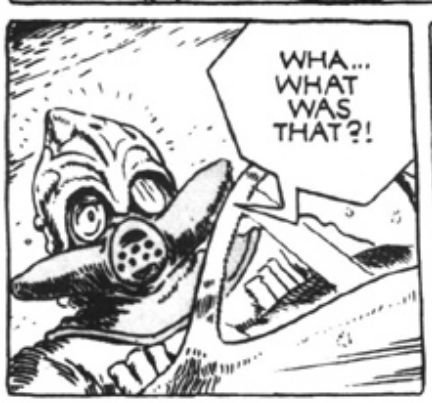
TWO GUN-SHIPS WENT DOWN, WITH THEIR BARGES!
WHO'S ATTACK-ING!?
CAN'T TELL. THEY'RE FIGHTING THE TORUMEKIANS ALOFT!
THE VALLEY BARGE WON'T MAKE IT...

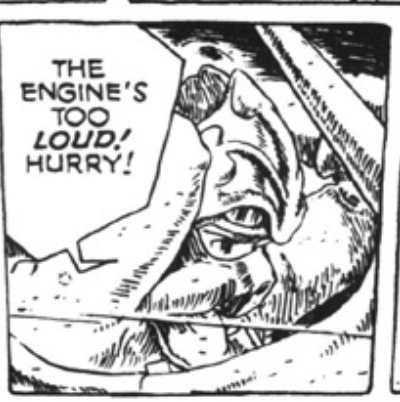

DUMP THE CARGO! WE NEED *ALTITUDE!*

SSSHHH
PRINCESS!
WE'RE DONE FOR!

WE'RE *DEAD MEN* IF WE LAND IN THE ROTWOOD!
WE'LL JUST BLOW OUR-SELVES UP AND GET IT OVER WITH!

IDIOTS! PULL YOUR-SELVES TOGETHER! MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING!
MITO! CUT THE ENGINE!


WHA... WHAT WAS THAT?!


THE ENGINE'S TOO *LOUD!* HURRY!

THIS MIASMA'S *TERRIBLE*-- A SINGLE BREATH COULD KILL ME...

PRINCESS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
CALM DOWN AND LISTEN TO ME!
I'LL SAVE YOUR LIVES IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO! DUMP YOUR CARGO! LIGHTEN THE BARGE!
P-PRINCESS!
YOU'LL DIE!
YOUR MASK, QUICKLY!
WE'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY!
RESTART THE ENGINE! WE'LL LOOK FOR A PLACE TO LAND.
VOM
HURRY IT UP, YOU LOT, OR THE PRINCESS WILL LAUGH AT US!
SHE ENDED THE PANIC WITH SUCH EASE...
THERE'S TRULY SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT HER...
TIME'S RUNNING OUT. WE NEED SOMEPLACE TO LAND...
HAHH
SOME OF IT GOT INTO MY LUNGS-- MY CHEST IS BURNING...
HAHH HAHH

BRAM BRAM
BOM BOM

BRAKKABRAKKA
BOM BOM

HE HAS THE SUN BEHIND HIM!
BRAKKABRAK
BRRT
BOOMM
GRNGRN
VRNNNNNNNN
CLOSE THE FORMATION! CONCEN-TRATE YOUR FIRE!

HERE HE COMES! HE'S TARGETING *TRANS-PORT TWO!*

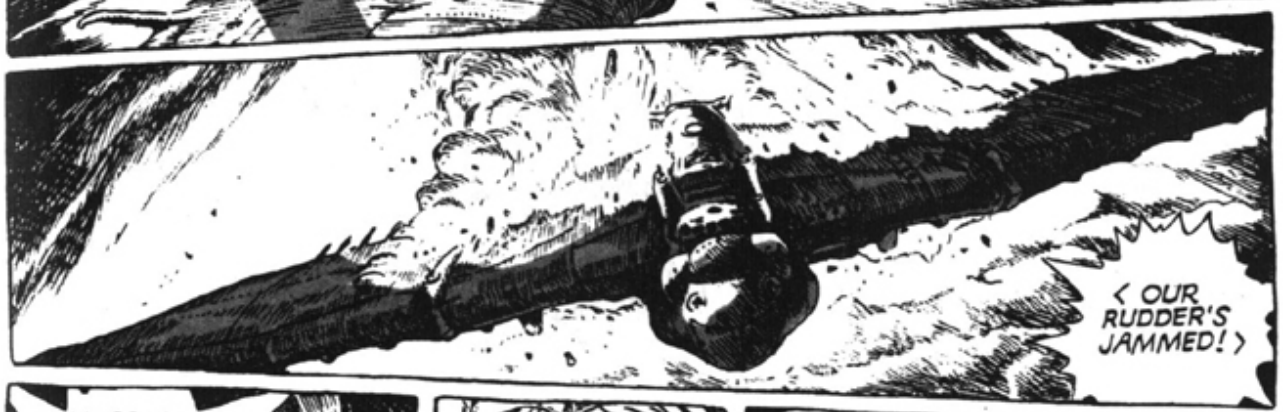
YOU'RE *SURE* IT'S THE PEJITE! GUNSHIP?
VNNN
BRAM
POSITIVE, SIR! HE'S AN AGILE LITTLE BASTARD...!

TOO BAD YOU LET HIM GET AWAY WHEN YOU TOOK PEJITE!, eh, YOUR HIGH-NESS?

Hmph! IF YOU HAVE WIT ENOUGH FOR *SARCASM*, USE IT TO GET US OUT OF THIS.

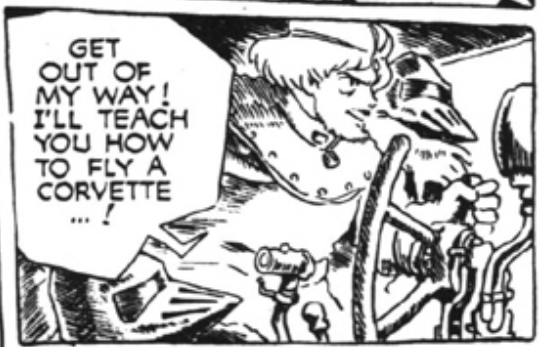
FASH

TRANS-PORT TWO IS HIT!
WHBOOM


< OUR RUDDER'S JAMMED! >

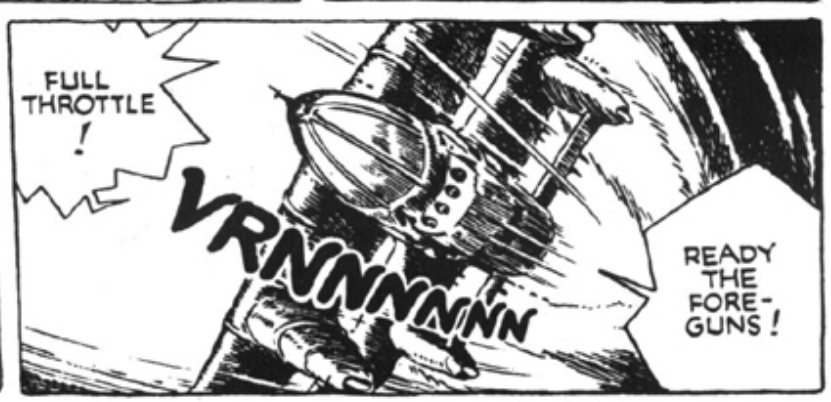
MESSAGE INCOMING FROM TRANSPORT TWO! THEY'RE SAYING FAREWELL!

IDIOT! WHY DON'T YOU FIGHT BACK?! HE'LL WIPE US OUT!


GET OUT OF MY WAY! I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO FLY A CORVETTE ...!

THIS MIGHT GET A LITTLE ROUGH, YOUR HIGH-NESS.

GO AHEAD ...
THE ENEMY'S CLOSING ON THE LEAD SHIP!


FULL THROTTLE!
VRNNNNNN
READY THE FORE-GUNS!

SHREEEEEE
AAA
VRNN
STOP YOUR SQUALLING!
VRRNNNNNNN
YOU THINK THIS IS A LUXURY LINER?!
HE'S USING THE SMOKE FROM OUR OWN SHIPS TO SNEAK UP ON THE ENEMY-- HE'S A DANGEROUS MAN, THIS KUROTOWA...
VRNNN
NOT YET...
NOT YET...
HERE! NOW!
KCHAK
HOOM
GOT HIM!
VOM

FIRE!
BLAM BLAM
SPAKK
SHREEE
SHREEE
HAH! HE DID IT!
SHUT UP! HE'S ONLY SCRATCHED!
DAMN GOOD PILOT! EVADING MY FIRE...!
HE'S ON OUR TAIL!
SHREE
HERE HE COMES! ALL TURRETS FIRE AT WILL!
SHREE
BRAKA

A BUMBLE-CROW! COMING THROUGH THE CLOUDS!
A SECOND ONE'S BEEN HIT!
NOT AGAIN!
THEY'RE JUMPING TO ESCAPE THE FLAMES... IT'S A BAD WAY TO GO, EVEN FOR A SOLDIER...
NO, NO, NO...
CHILDREN... CLINGING TO EACH OTHER...
THE FOOLS! BRINGING CADETS ON A MISSION LIKE THIS!

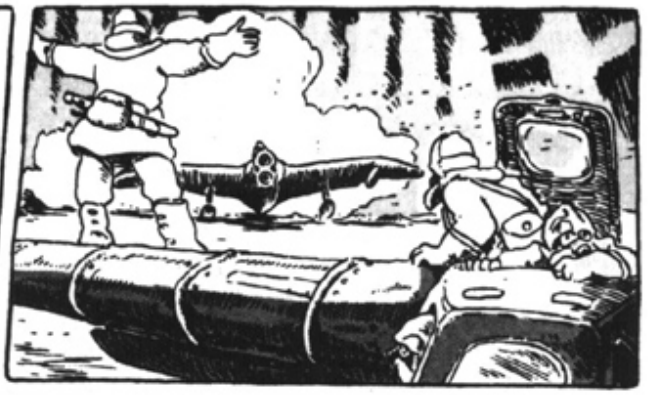
.....
...sob...
.....
PRIN-CESS!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
PRINCESS, WE'RE IN A NOSE-DIVE!
<STOP IT!!>
SPARK
SPARK
SHREEEEEEEEEE
<YOU MUSTN'T KILL THEM!>
SHREEEEE
<BROTHER OF RASTEL!>
<STOP THE KILLING!>
WHO IS THAT?! WHERE ARE YOU?!
<PLEASE... PLEASE STOP...>
WHO... WHO ARE YOU?!

SHE'S CRYING...
A LITTLE GIRL...
WHO ARE YOU ...?
WHY ARE YOU CRYING ...?
WHAT'S YOUR NAME ...?
<NAUSICAÄ ...>
.....
.....
SHE'S GONE ...
AAA!
BLA BLAM

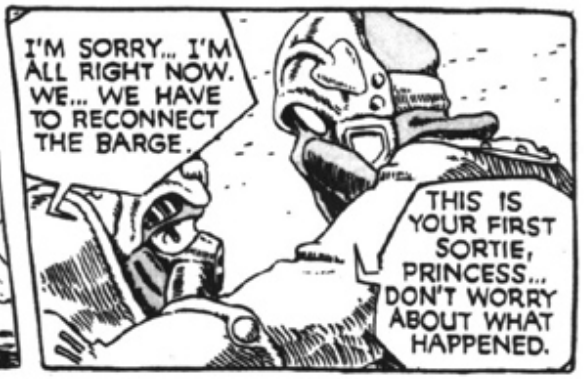
KOOM
GOT HIM!
Whew! THAT WAS TOO DAMNED CLOSE!
HE BEAT THE HELL OUT OF US... IT'S A SEA OF BLOOD IN HERE...
....
YOU MADE A SHIELD OF YOUR OWN BODIES TO PROTECT ME-- I WILL NEVER FORGET YOUR LOYALTY...
YOUR HIGHNESS ...
WE'VE TAKEN SEVERE LOSSES. SHALL WE SCRUB THE OPERATION AND PULL BACK?
NO! GET THE FORMATION BACK IN ORDER. WE HEAD SOUTH, JUST AS PLANNED.
WE'LL BURY THE DEAD AT THE ENCAMP-MENT.
YES, COM-MANDER!
NO... IT CAN'T BE, THE WOMAN'S NOT CRYING, IS SHE...?
RUN UP A SIGNAL FLAG! GET THE FLOTILLA BACK INTO FORMATION!

whssssss
WATER!
WE'LL PUT DOWN ON THE WATER!
SSSTT

KOOSH



THAT ONE GAVE ME THE COLD SHIVERS, IT DID, PRINCESS!

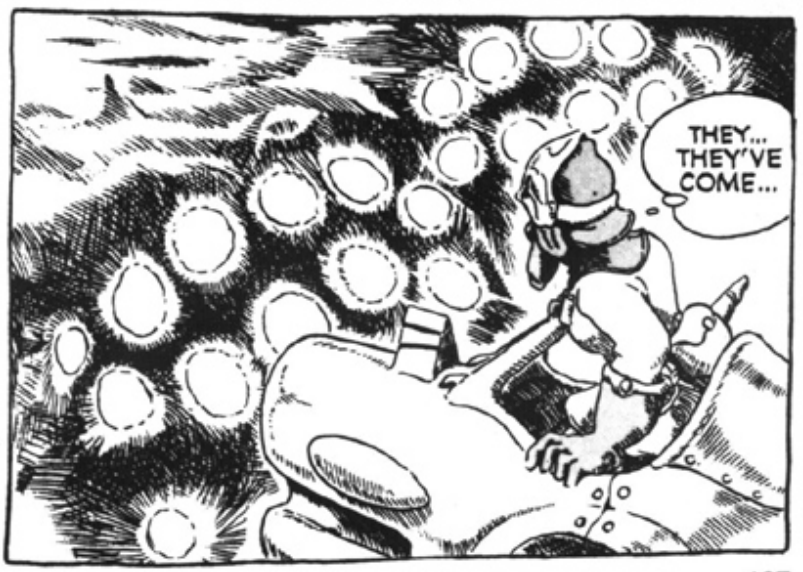

I'M SORRY... I'M ALL RIGHT NOW. WE... WE HAVE TO RECONNECT THE BARGE.
THIS IS YOUR FIRST SORTIE, PRINCESS... DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.

JUST REST HERE A WHILE... WE'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERY-THING.
WE'LL GET OUT OF THIS ILL-BEGOTTEN PLACE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

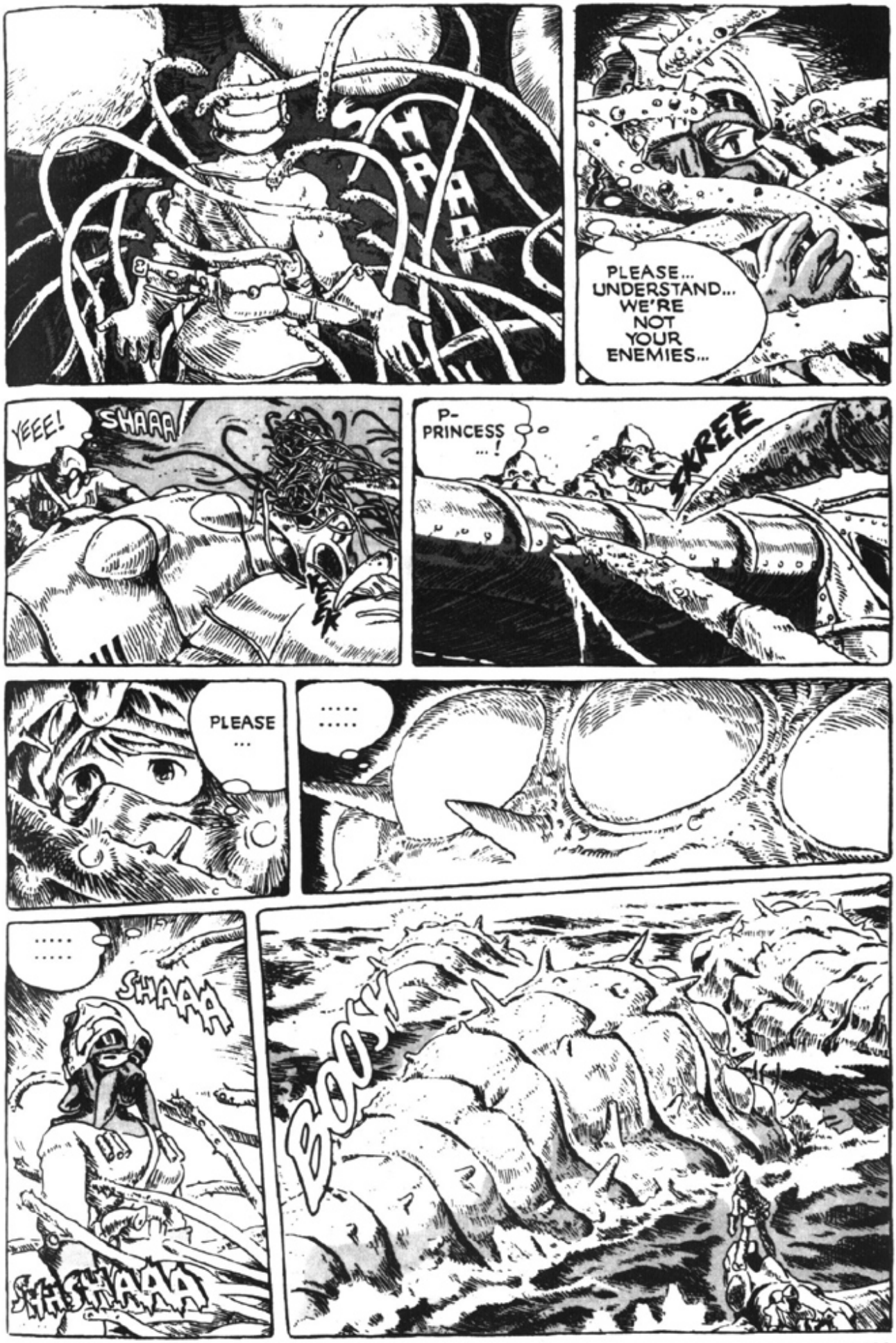
.....
.....

THE WATER'S SO CLEAR IT'S ALMOST FRIGHTEN-ING...

THAT BOY... I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM...


THEY... THEY'VE COME...

AAA!!
KWOOSH
OHMU!
WE'VE LANDED IN AN OHMU NEST!
QUIET! DON'T SHOOT-- IF YOU ANGER THEM, WE'RE FINISHED.
PRINCESS...
NOBODY MOVE. I'LL TRY TO TALK WITH THEM.


SHAAA
PLEASE... UNDERSTAND... WE'RE NOT YOUR ENEMIES...
YEEE!
SHAAA
P- PRINCESS ...!
SKREE
PLEASE ...
.....
.....
.....
.....
SHAAA
SHAAA
BOOM

THE OHMU...! THEY'RE LEAVING!
PRINCESS!

IT WAS LIKE A DREAM ...!
CALMING AN OHMU WITH-OUT USING STROBE GRENADES!

....?! PRINCESS! YOU'RE WHITE AS A GHOST!

S- SO COLD...

....
THIS WON'T DO... SHE'S COLD AS ICE!

IT'S BECAUSE SHE LOOKED INTO THE HEART OF THE OHMU...
THOSE CURSED MONSTERS! WHAT DID THEY SHOW OUR PRINCESS?!

PRINCESS! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
L... LET ME GO...!

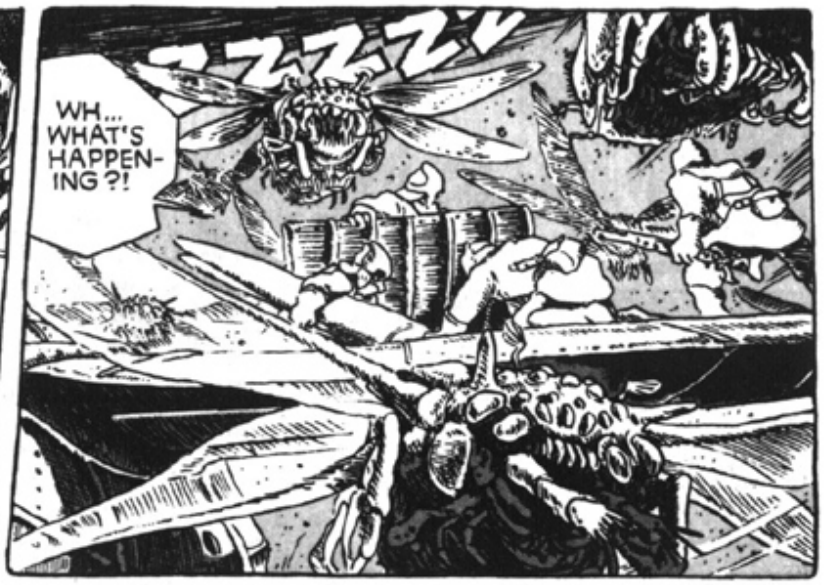
IT'S ABOUT TO BEGIN...
JUST LIKE OHMU SAID.
W-WHAT DID YOU SAY...?

W-WE STORED HER IN THE WING CAVITY-- SHE'S STILL THERE...
BUT SURELY YOU DON'T MEAN TO... NOT HERE!

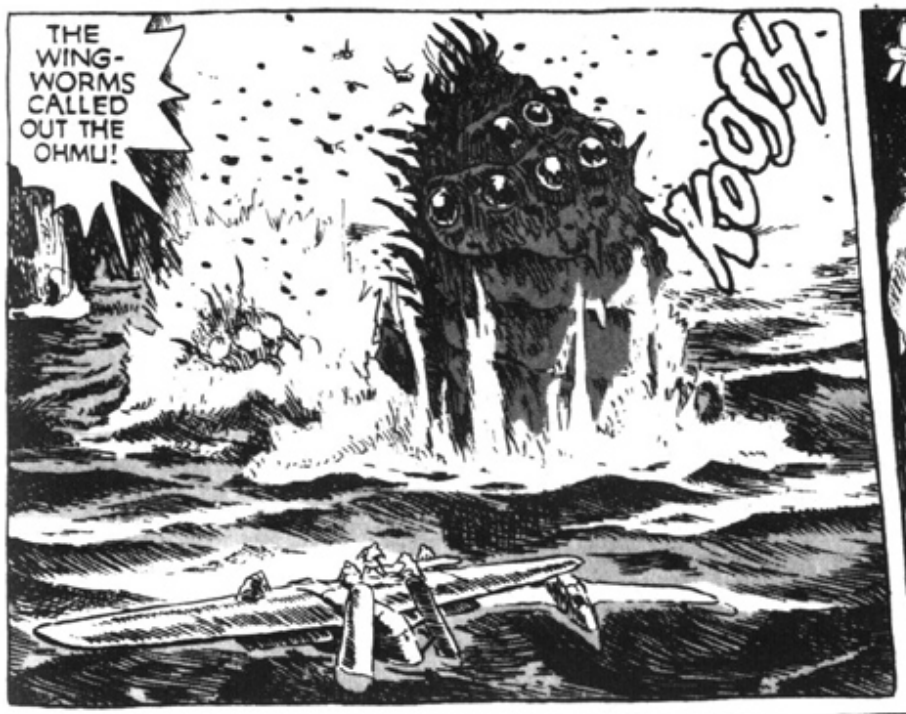
YOU DIDN'T DUMP MEHVE TO SAVE WEIGHT, DID YOU? SHE'S STILL ON BOARD?

BZZZ
LOOK OUT! A WING-WORM!
UNLOAD MEHVE! I HAVE TO GO!

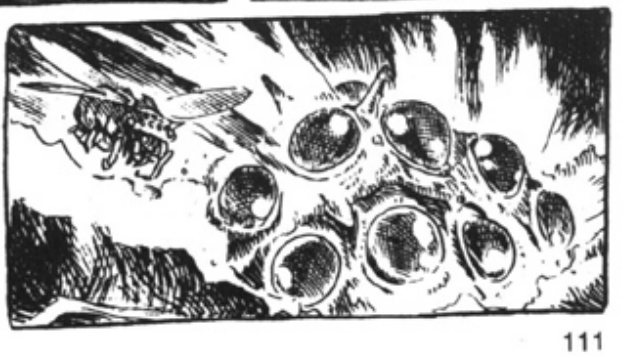
BZZZZZZZ
THE WHOLE FOREST IS AWAKENING... HURRY!


WH... WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

PRINCESS! LOOK!

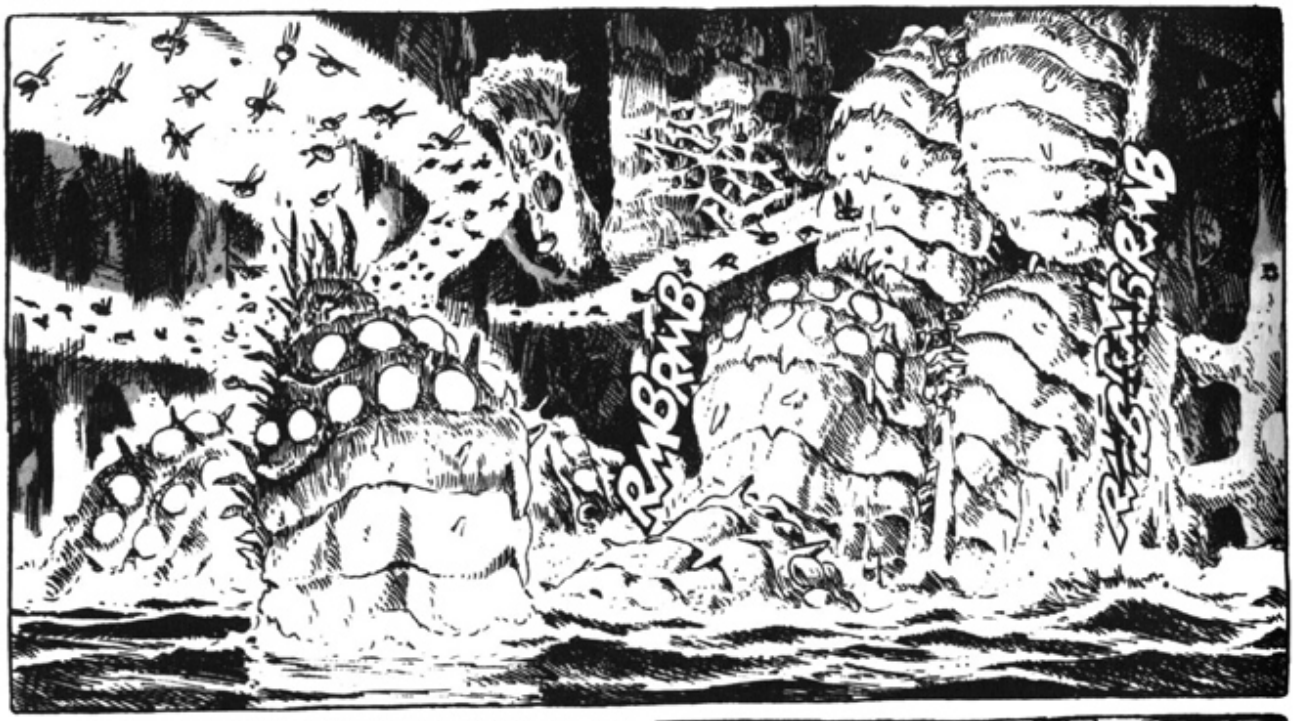

THE WING-WORMS CALLED OUT THE OHMU!
KOOSH

LOOK AT THEIR EYES!



THEIR EYES ARE AFLAME... THE ATTACK COLOR!

COULD SOMEONE HAVE KILLED AN INSECT NEARBY...?
THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE... IT'S ALREADY BEGUN.


BMB
BMB
BMB

PRINCESS, IT'S TOO DANGEROUS... DON'T GO!
AS SOON AS THE WAVES SETTLE, TAKE OFF. WAIT FOR ME ALOFT.

WAIT ONLY ONE HOUR-- IF I HAVEN'T RETURNED BY THEN, HEAD FOR THE ENCAMPMENT.

PRINCESS!
SHOOM

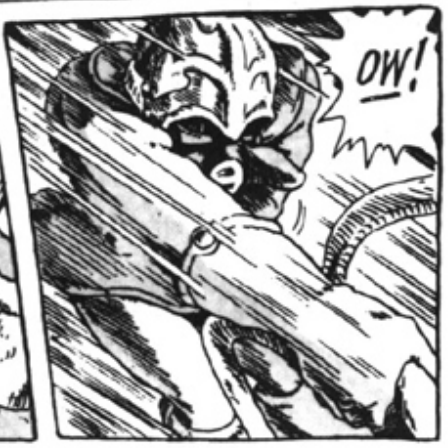
TETO!!
SPSH

LITTLE FOOL! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE ?!

AAH!
IT'S TOO LATE NOW!

GET INSIDE, QUICKLY!

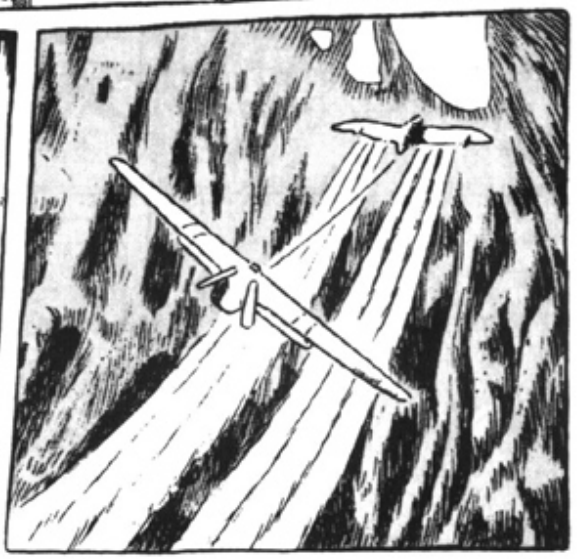
KEE

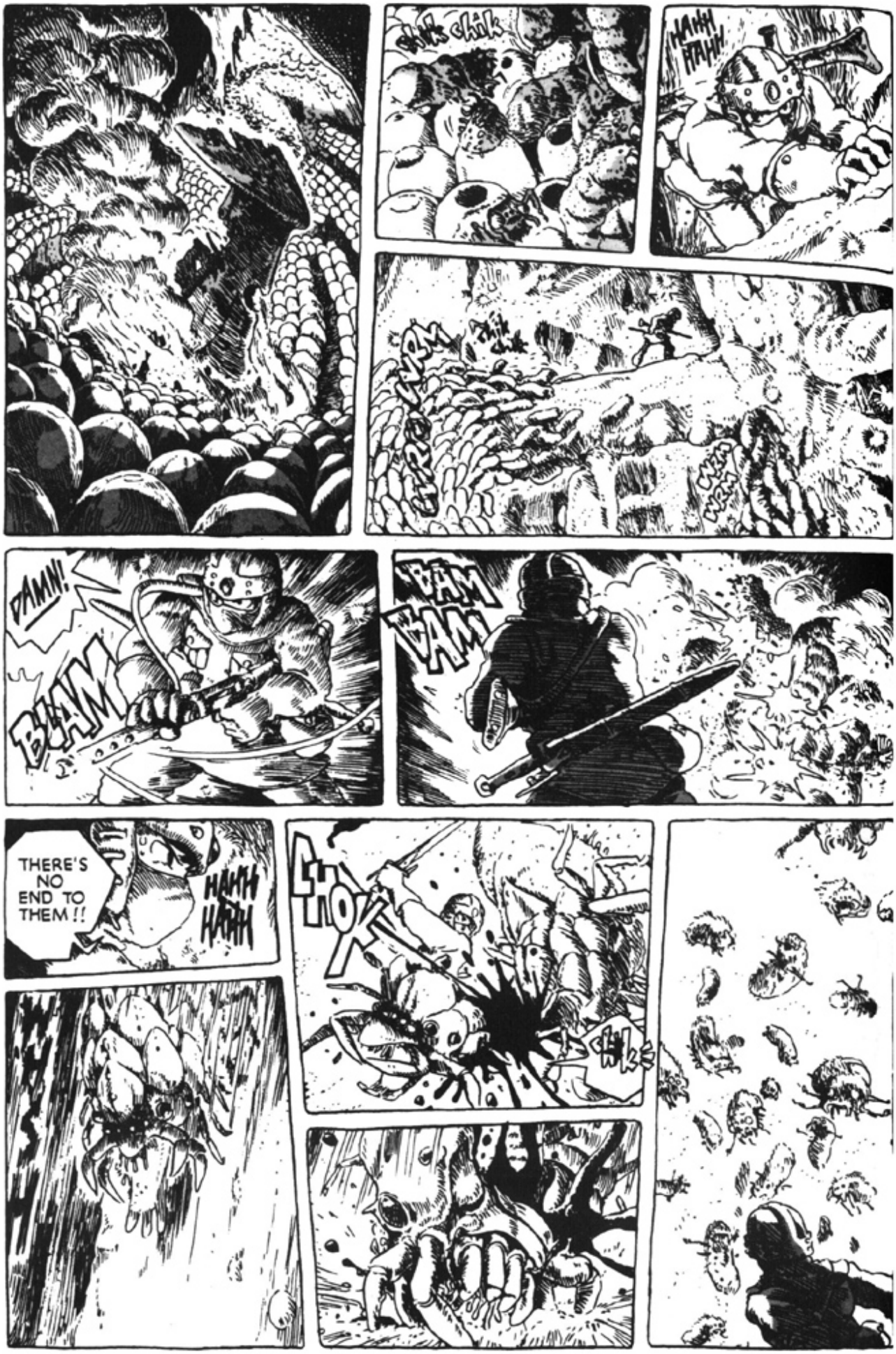

OW!

HHSSSHH

WE CAN'T LEAVE THE PRINCESS HERE! I'M STAYING!
SHUT UP, YOU! GET IN THE BARGE, NOW!

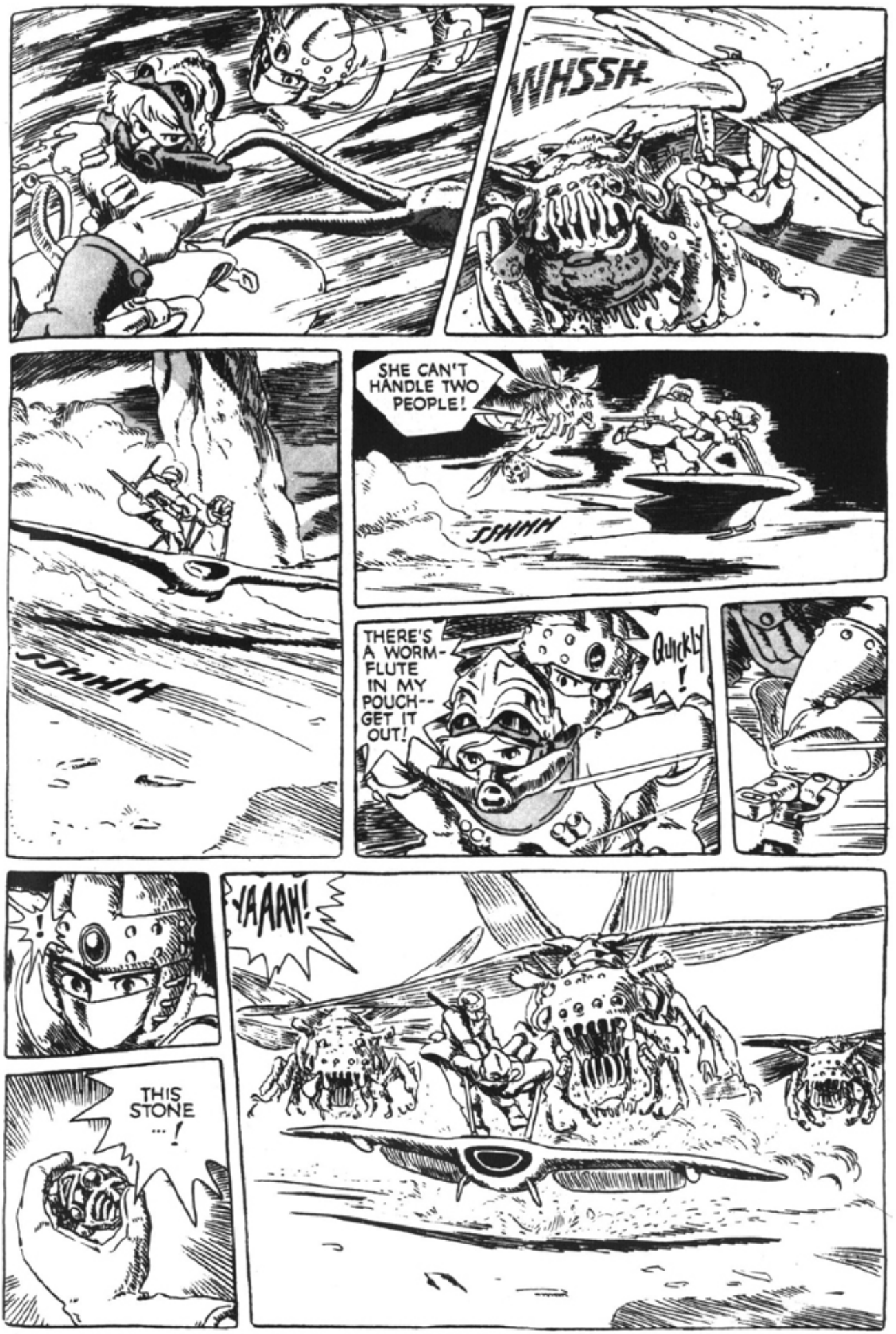
KWMPH

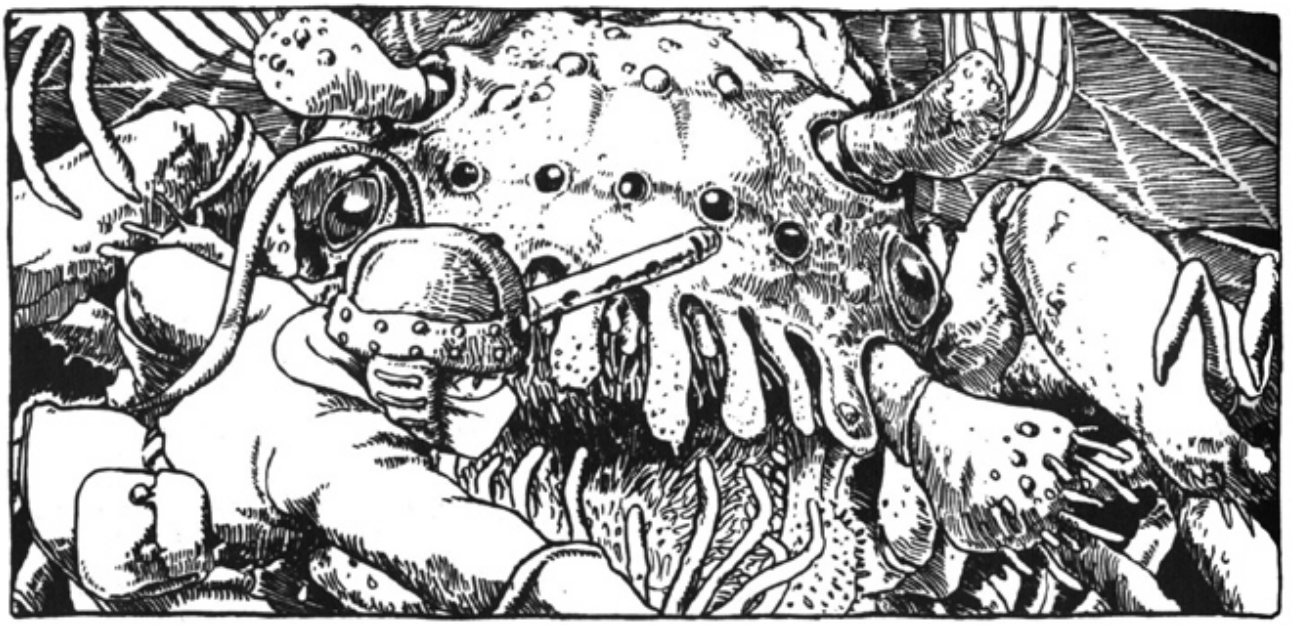



chik chik
HAHH HAHH
DAMN!
BAM
BAM BAM
THERE'S NO END TO THEM!!
HAHH HAHH
SHOK
chk

LAST ONE!
IT BLEW A HOLE IN THE TRUNK!
IT'S HOLLOW!
!
SPIT

THIS TREE...! WHA?!
SKRASSH
IT'S MADE OF SAND!
KSS
SSSS
EEYAAH!

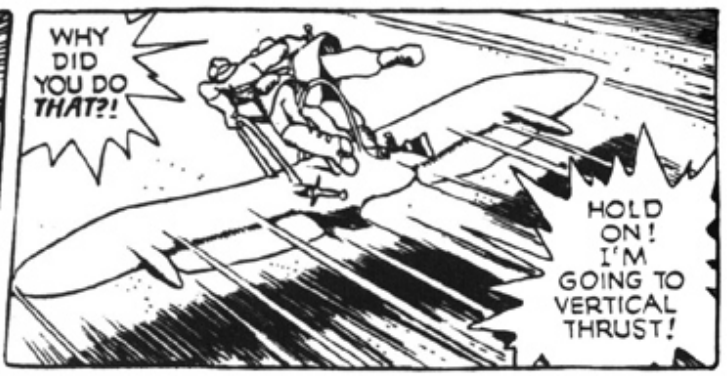

WHSSH
SHE CAN'T HANDLE TWO PEOPLE!
JSHHH
JSHHH
THERE'S A WORM-FLUTE IN MY POUCH-- GET IT OUT!
QUICKLY!
!
THIS STONE ...!
YAAAH!

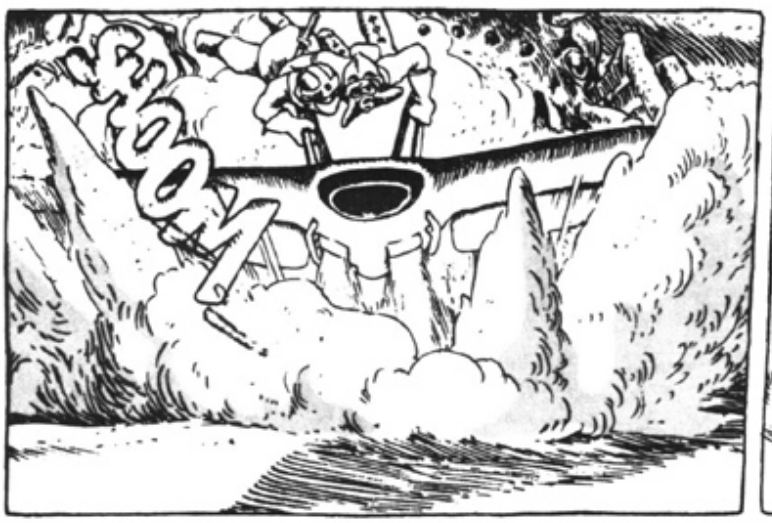


DAMN IT!
BLAM

BLAM BLAM
STOP! DON'T USE YOUR GUN!!

WOK!
UHKK!


WHY DID YOU DO THAT?!
HOLD ON! I'M GOING TO VERTICAL THRUST!


BOM

WAHH!
YWSSHHH
BZZZZZ
chik chik
IT'S NO GOOD JUST RUNNING AWAY!
WHY DON'T YOU FIGHT?!
YOU'VE ALREADY DONE TOO MUCH KILLING...
LOOK OVER-HEAD!
AAA! THOUSANDS OF THEM!!
BZZZZZZ
STROBE GRENADES AND WORM-FLUTES WON'T WORK ANY MORE...
BZZZZZZ
chik chik
kkik
THERE! IN THERE!
whsssst

.....!!
WHSSSSSSSSSHH
SKRAAUUH
INCREDIBLE! YOU FLY LIKE THE WIND ITSELF!
WE'VE LOST THEM...
OHMU!
!

HKK!
whssh
SHOOM
!!
Oh, NO!
WHOD
Uhngg...
AAA!
No!! DON'T COME BACK FOR ME!
GET AWAY WHILE YOU CAN!

KNCH
.... !!
MY MASK!!
AAA...!
chik
chik
No!
MONSTER! I'LL PUNCH YOU FULL OF HOLES!
CEASE!
KILL NOT!
DAMN YOU!
KANG
SCATTER, WINGED BRETHREN!

!
AAA!
WMPH
YOU MONSTER, GONNA EAT HER, ARE YOU!!
LET HER GO! BEAST!
SHAAAA

HER MASK!

HOLD ON!
DON'T DIE!

LISTEN...

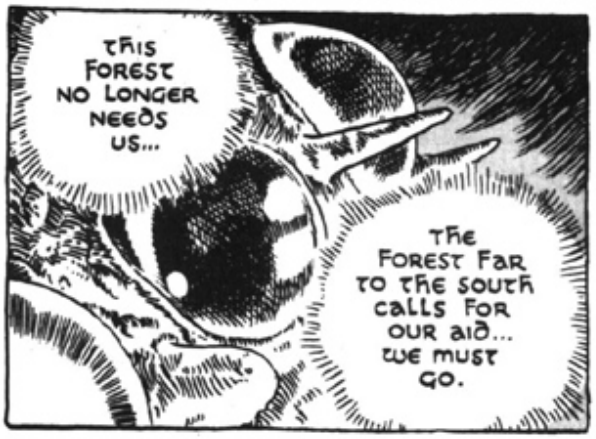
...!!

HEAR US, AGGRESSOR ...

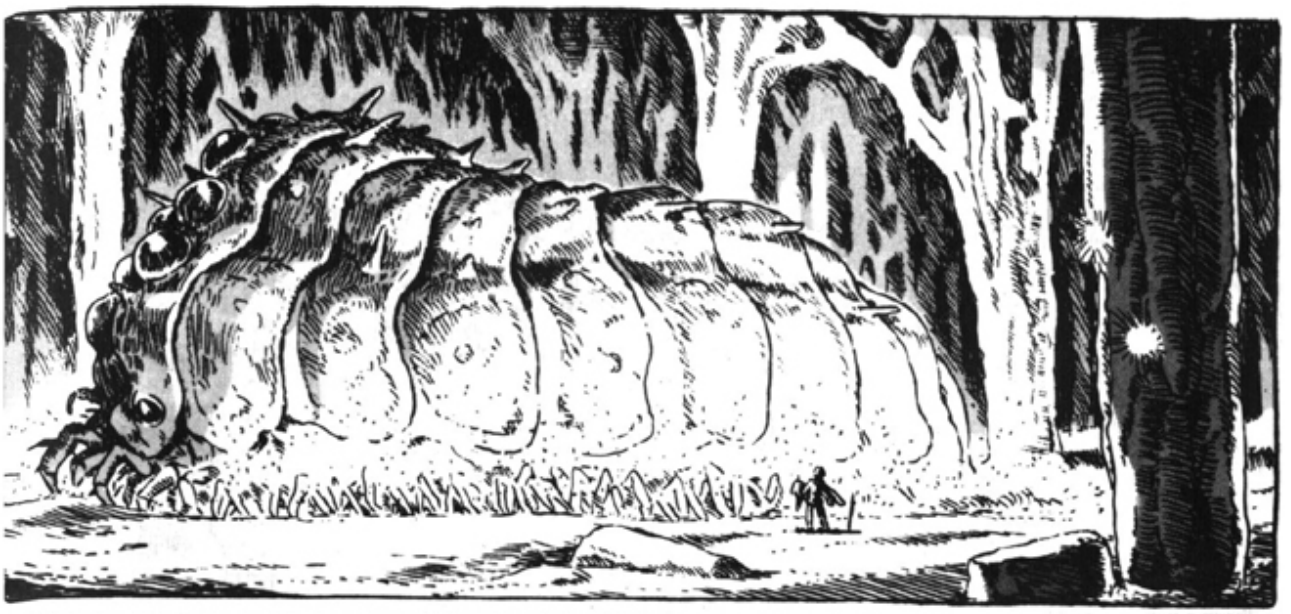
THE LITTLE ONE WILL NOT DIE...
THE OHMU... IT'S SPEAKING ...!
YOU KILLED MANY...

BUT THE LITTLE ONE PLEADS TO US, KILL HIM NOT...
SO WE KILL YOU NOT...
DEPART, AGGRESSOR...

LITTLE ONE, OUR RACE HAS KNOWN OF YOUR COMING SINCE YEARS GONE BY...
OUR RACE IS AS ONE, EACH OF US IN THE WHOLE, THE WHOLE IN EACH OF US. OUR HEARTS SPEAK ACROSS TIME AND SPACE...


THIS FOREST NO LONGER NEEDS US...
THE FOREST FAR TO THE SOUTH CALLS FOR OUR AID... WE MUST GO.

FARE-WELL, LITTLE ONE.



HEE!

WH...WHAT'S GOING ON? I'M STILL ALIVE, WITHOUT MY MASK...
MY LUNGS ARE FINE...

IT'S A MIRACLE! WE'RE *ALIVE!*
THERE'S NO MIASMA HERE!

IT'S LIKE A DREAM... HOW COULD THE BOTTOM OF THE FOREST BE SO PURE...?

HA HA HA
DON'T BE SO ANGRY, THERE! WE'VE BEEN SAVED!
HSS

WHAT A WONDROUS GIRL...

SHE LOOKS LIKE RASTEL...

THEY'RE CALLING ME...
COME...
THAT'S MY FATHER'S HAND...
....
MY MOTHER'S HERE, TOO...
EVERY-ONE'S SILENT...
WHERE ARE WE GOING...?
I DON'T WANT TO GO THERE...
YOU MUSTN'T COME HERE!
GO AWAY! THERE'S NOTHING HERE!

THERE'S NOTHING HERE...!

IT'S AN OHMU LARVA...
AS I FEARED...
SHE'S BEEN POSSESSED BY THE INSECTS...

GIVE IT TO ME...
NO! IT'S NOT DOING ANY-THING WRONG!

INSECTS AND HUMANS CANNOT LIVE IN THE SAME WORLD...
NO! NO!

DON'T KILL IT!

PLEASE...

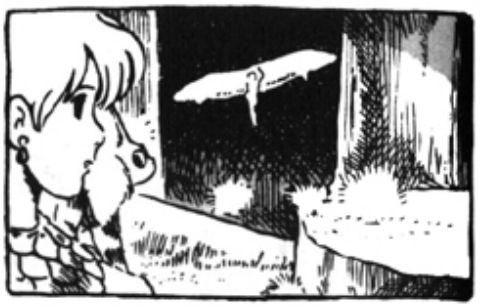
...

TETO...
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT... I'M SO GLAD.

IT'S THAT BOY'S JACKET...

I WONDER WHERE WE ARE...?

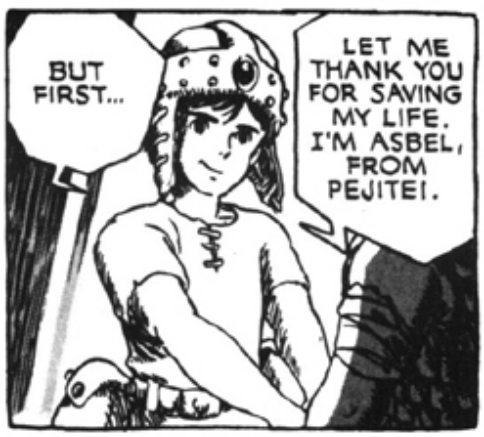
WHAT A WONDROUS PLACE...



HEY...!

I FINALLY FOUND IT...
IT FLEW A LONG WAY BEFORE COMING DOWN, SO IT TOOK ME QUITE A WHILE.

WHERE ARE WE...?
WELL...
SO MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED, I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN!


BUT FIRST...
LET ME THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE. I'M ASBEL, FROM PEJITEI.

AND I'M NAUSICAÄ, FROM THE VALLEY OF WIND. YOU'RE RASTEL'S OLDER BROTHER, AREN'T YOU?

NAUSICAÄ?! THEN THAT WAS *YOUR* VOICE...!
BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW MY SISTER?

.....
SO THAT'S HOW IT WAS...

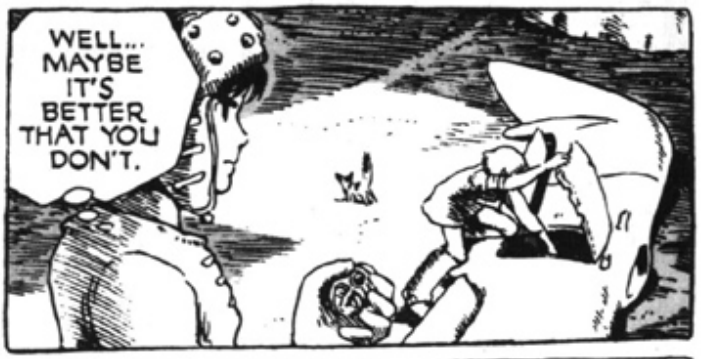
AT... AT LEAST SHE DIED WITHOUT BEING SHAMED BY TORUMEKIAN SOLDIERS... THAT'S SOME CONSULATION...

WE WERE TWINS... I-I WANTED TO BE BY HER SIDE...

SHE ASKED ME TO GIVE THAT TO YOU.
THE IMPERIAL GUARDS WERE SEARCHING FOR IT-- THEY EVEN USED WORM-HANDLERS.

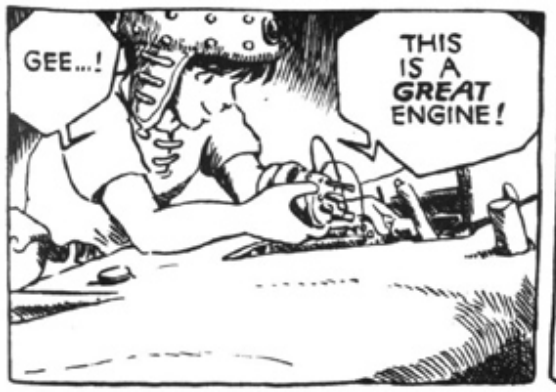
SORRY ABOUT THIS...
I FOUND IT IN YOUR POUCH AND JUST HELD ON TO IT.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT... I WAS KEEPING IT FOR YOU, ANYWAY.

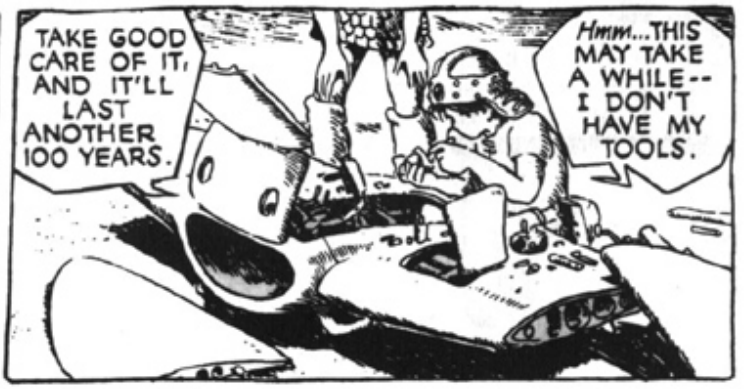
I'M GLAD I COULD KEEP MY PROMISE.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS STONE IS FOR...?
Uh-uh.


WELL... MAYBE IT'S BETTER THAT YOU DON'T.

IT'S BROKEN...

HERE... LET ME.
I WAS RAISED IN A FACTORY TOWN...


GEE...!
THIS IS A GREAT ENGINE!


TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT, AND IT'LL LAST ANOTHER 100 YEARS.
Hmm...THIS MAY TAKE A WHILE-- I DON'T HAVE MY TOOLS.

TETO'S CALLING...
I'LL BE BACK IN A MINUTE...!
DON'T GO TOO FAR!
Aahh!
YOU FOUND MY POUCH!
WHAT A RELIEF... AND THE CHIKO NUTS ARE STILL HERE.
HERE... YOUR REWARD.
WE ONLY HAVE A FEW, SO ENJOY IT...
THE TREES TURN TO STONE... THE STONE TO SAND... THE SAND TO DUNES...
SO BEAUTI-FUL...
IT'S THE SAME AS THE SAND THAT MASTER YUPA SHOWED ME... SO LONG AGO.
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT THIS PLACE MAKES ME FEEL SO PEACEFUL...

KNUH
Hmmm... THESE "CHIKO NUT" THINGS SURE TASTE FUNNY...

THEY'RE VERY NUTRITIOUS. IN THE VALLEY, WE USE THEM AS A RESTORATIVE.
WELL, I DON'T CARE HOW THEY TASTE-- RIGHT NOW, I COULD EAT A BOOTFUL OF THEM!

IF I DON'T RUN INTO ANY PROBLEMS, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE OFF ABOUT NOON TOMORROW.
I'M AMAZED THERE'S ANYONE LEFT WHO CAN STILL FIX THESE ENGINES...
HA, HA... ACTUALLY, I CAN'T DO ANYTHING WITH THE ENGINE ITSELF-- IT'S JUST THE DISTRIBUTOR THAT'S BROKEN.

YOU SURE HAVE SOME INTERESTING IDEAS... THE "ROLE" OF THE FOREST, huh?

IT JUST CAME TO ME.
I CAN STILL HEAR WHAT OHMU SAID...

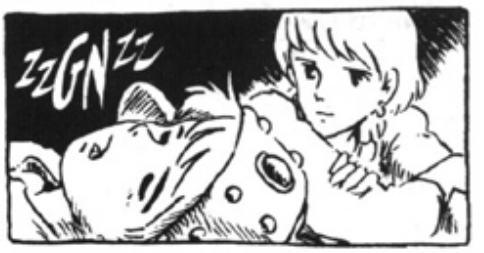
THIS FOREST NO LONGER NEEDS US...

I'M SURE THE FOREST ITSELF WAS CREATED TO CLEANSE THE WORLD...
IT TAKES INTO ITS BODY THE POLLUTION LEFT IN THE SOIL BY THE OLD CIVILIZATIONS, TURNS IT INTO HARMLESS CRYSTALS, THEN DIES AND TURNS TO SAND.

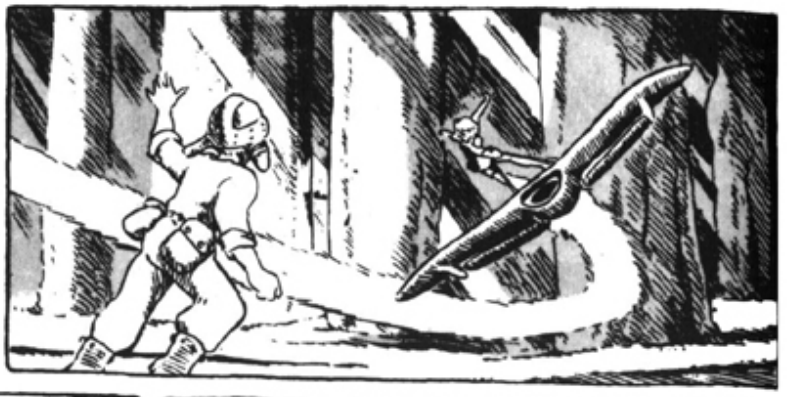
THAT'S WHAT MADE THIS CAVITY HERE AT THE ROOTS OF THE FOREST.
BUT... IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN WE HUMANS ARE DOOMED...

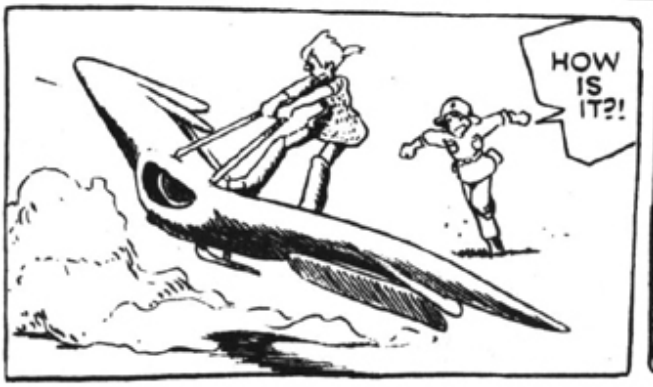
MAYBE IT'S BEAUTIFUL DOWN HERE, BUT WHAT GOOD IS A LIFELESS WORLD WHERE EVEN THE INSECTS CAN'T LIVE...?

IF WE HUMANS ARE THE REAL POLLUTION ...


ZZGNZZ

whssssss

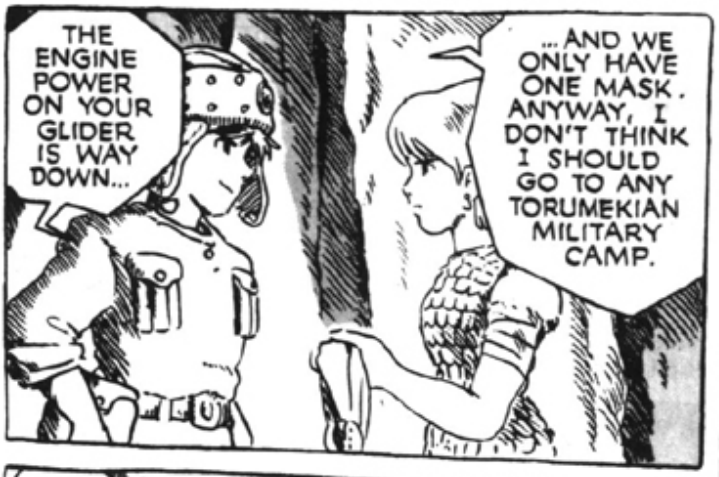



HOW IS IT?!

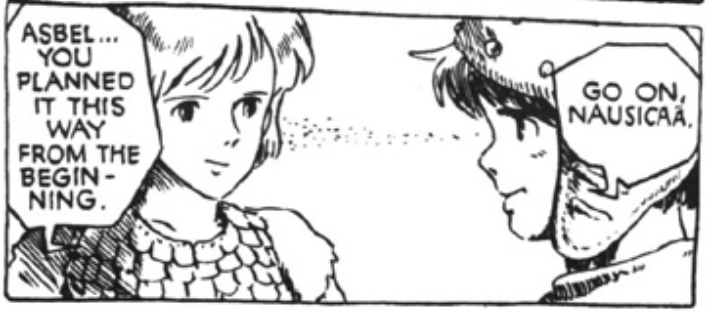
WONDER-FUL!
I'M STILL NOT USED TO USING A BELT INSTEAD OF A CONTROL BAR, BUT...

WELL, I GUESS IT'S GOODBYE, NAUSICAÄ.
HERE, TAKE THIS...

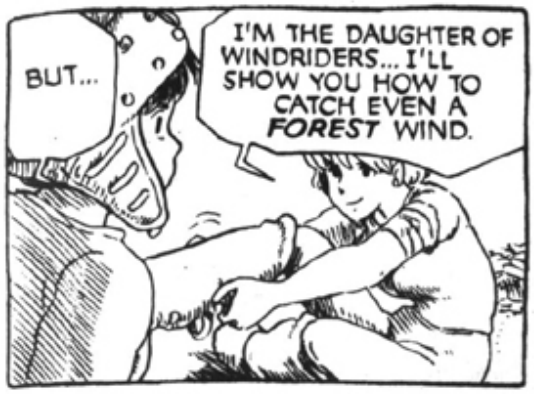
YOUR MASK ...?
YOU'LL HAVE TO PASS THROUGH THE MIASMA TO REACH THE OPEN AIR.


THE ENGINE POWER ON YOUR GLIDER IS WAY DOWN...
...AND WE ONLY HAVE ONE MASK. ANYWAY, I DON'T THINK I SHOULD GO TO ANY TORUMEKIAN MILITARY CAMP.

I WILL... AND I'LL TAKE RASTEL'S BROTHER WITH ME.


ASBEL... YOU PLANNED IT THIS WAY FROM THE BEGIN-NING.
GO ON, NAUSICAÄ.

WELL, NOW... DON'T JUST STAND THERE... GET RID OF ANY EXTRA WEIGHT YOU CAN!

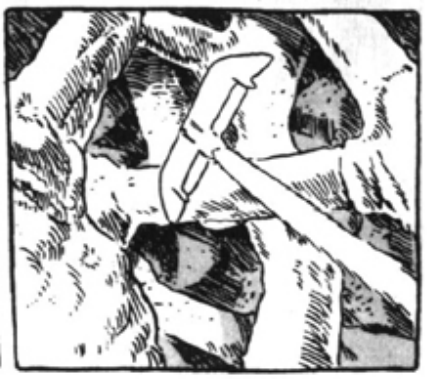

BUT...
I'M THE DAUGHTER OF WINDRIDERS... I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO CATCH EVEN A *FOREST* WIND.

HALF A MASK WON'T BE ENOUGH...
IT'LL JUST BE FOR A FEW MINUTES... TRY TO BEAR IT.

TETO... I'LL CLOSE THE FLAP FOR YOU WHEN WE GO THROUGH THE MIASMA.

THERE ARE ALWAYS SOME UPDRAFTS WHEN THE TREES RELEASE THEIR AFTERNOON SPORES.
WE'LL CATCH THE BREEZE WITH MEHVE, AND RIDE IT STRAIGHT UP OUT OF THE FOREST!

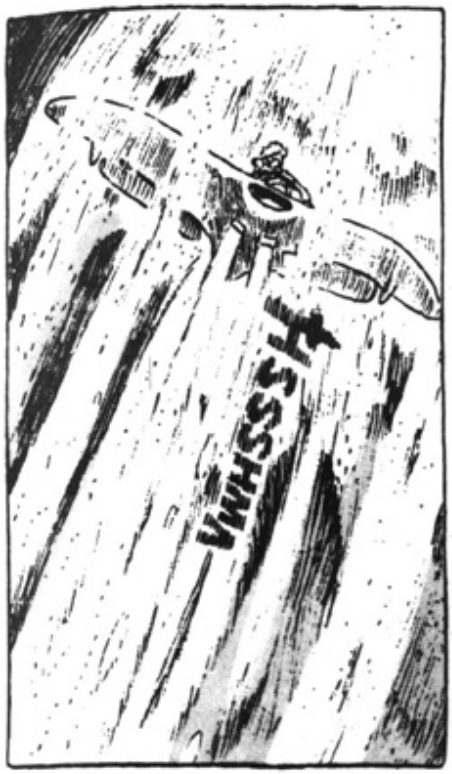
KSHOOM



WE'RE THROUGH THE ROOF OF THE CAVITY! FROM HERE IT LOOKS LIKE A MAP...

WHAT A BLIZZARD OF MIASMA AND SPORES! THIS LAYER'S EVEN MORE ACTIVE THAN NORMAL...
ACTIVE LAYER
PETRIFIED LAYER
VAULTS

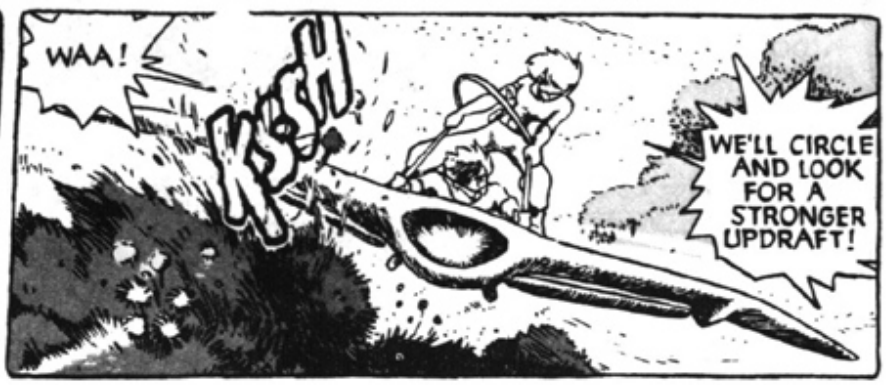
THERE'S OUR WIND!


VWHSSSH

WE'VE CLEARED THE TREE-TOPS...!
SHEEE

WE'RE SO HEAVY THE WIND'S JUST SLIPPING BY THE WINGS... WE CAN'T GAIN ALTITUDE.

WE'LL TRY AGAIN!

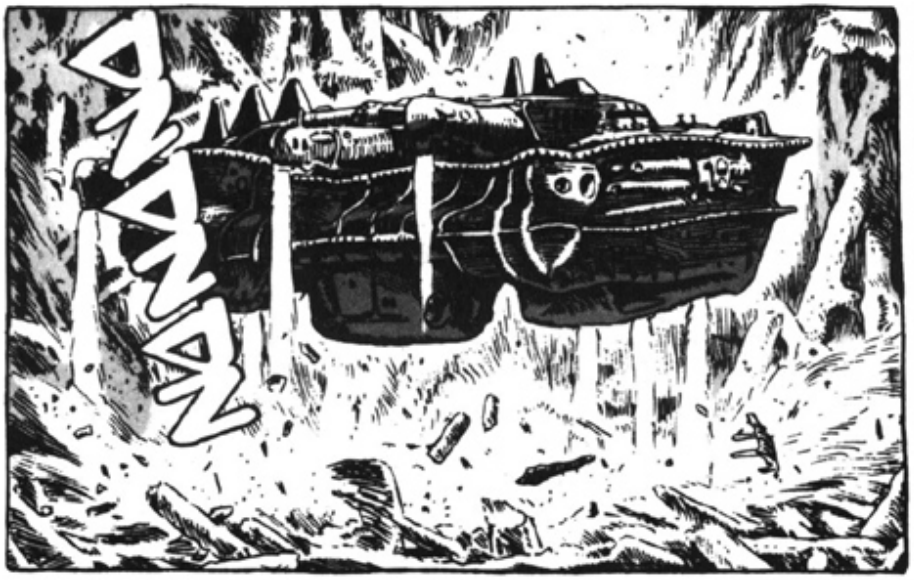

WAA!
KISH
WE'LL CIRCLE AND LOOK FOR A STRONGER UPDRAFT!

!!

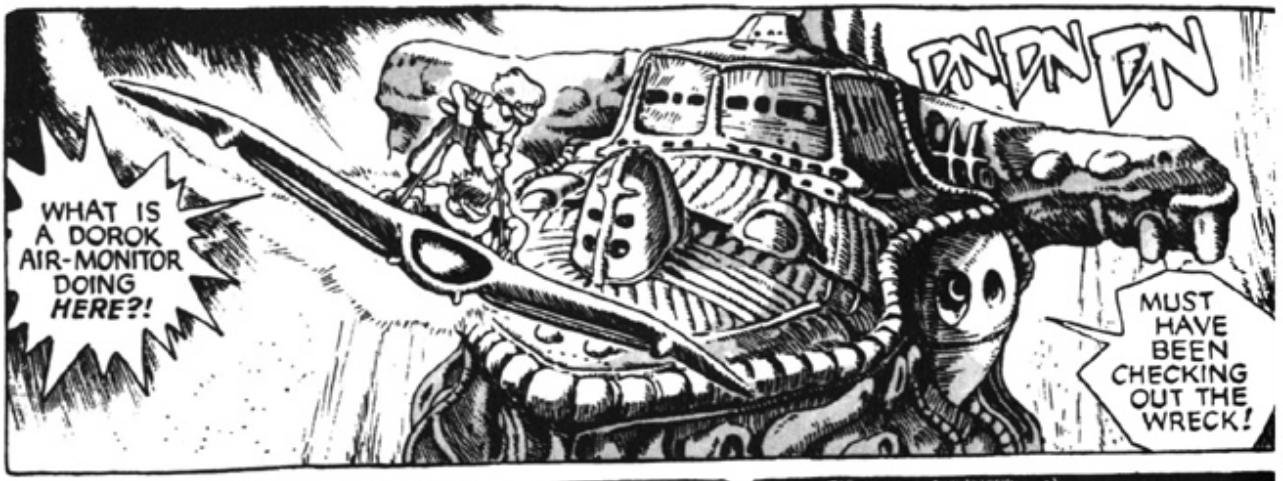
IT'S WRECKAGE! ONE OF THE TORUMEKIAN WARSHIPS!

!?

WHAT'S THAT?!


DANDAN

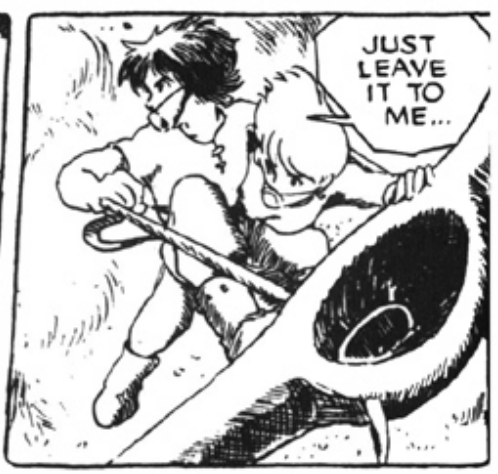
IT'S A DOROK SHIP!!


WHAT IS A DOROK AIR-MONITOR DOING HERE?!
DN DN DN
MUST HAVE BEEN CHECKING OUT THE WRECK!

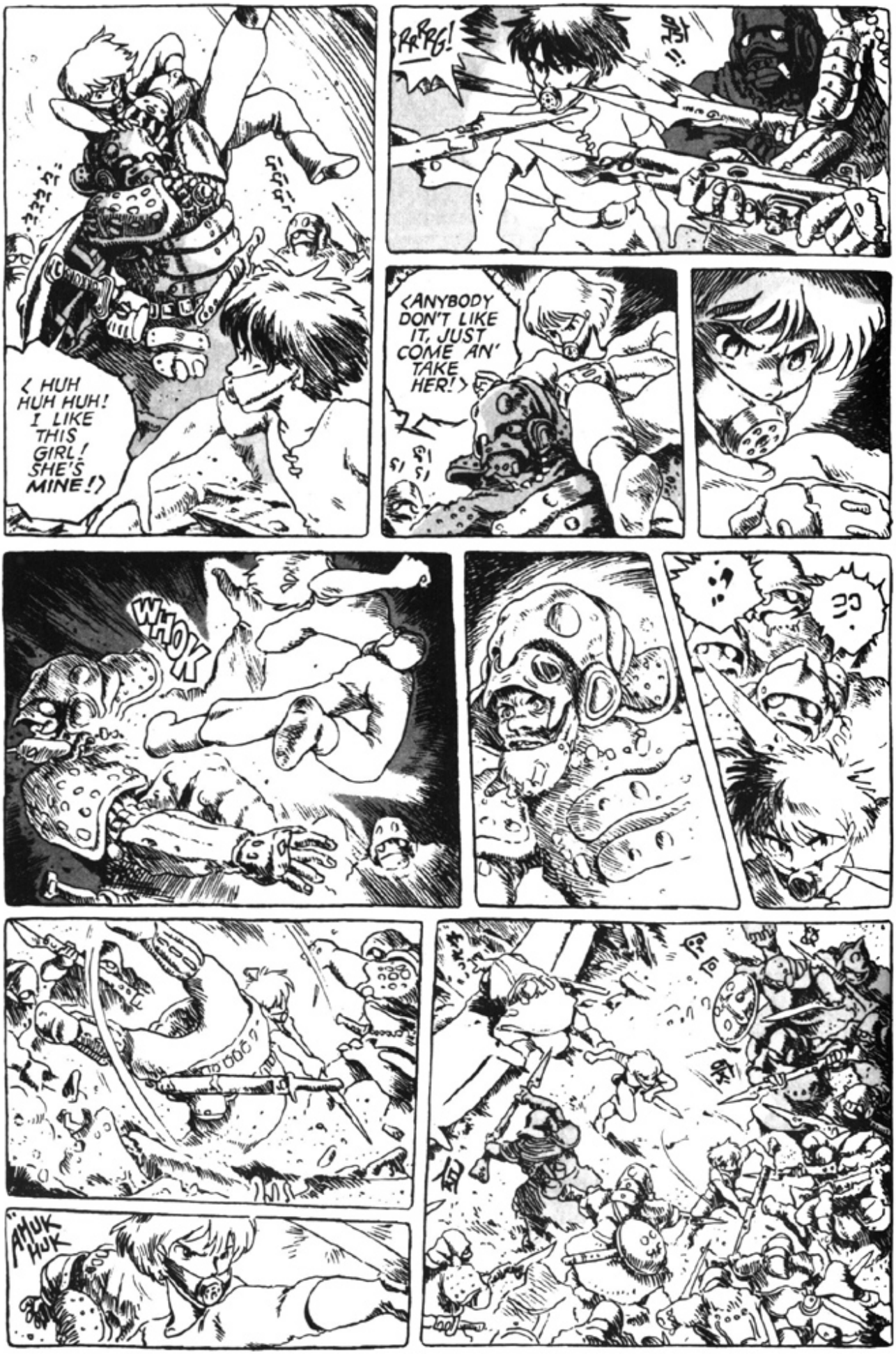
THEY'RE AFTER US!
NAUSICAÄ! LAND AND I'LL NEGOTIATE WITH THEM!

BOM
BOM
BOM

WRAM
THEY'LL GET US IF WE RUN!

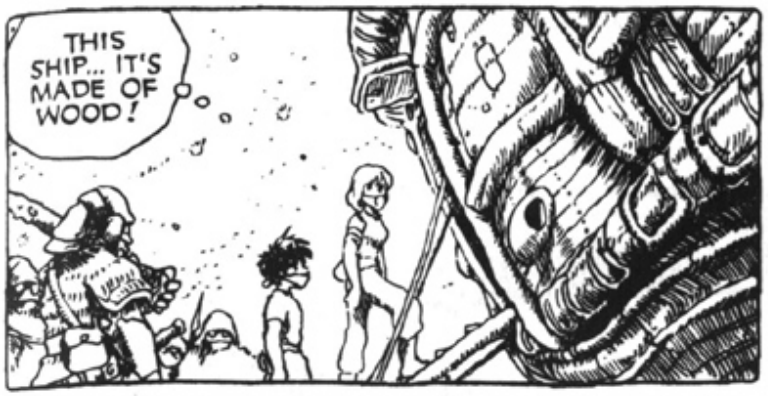

JUST LEAVE IT TO ME...

〈HARMONY BETWEEN FIRE AND WATER! WE ARE NOT ENEMIES!〉
〈I AM ASBEL OF THE CITY OF PEJITEI... LET US SPEAK TO YOUR PRIEST!〉
〈PEJITEI? HUH! NEVER HEARD OF IT!〉
〈DEATH TO THE TORU-MEKIAN FILTH!〉
〈DIE!〉
〈KILL THE SCUM!〉
〈LET US SPEAK TO YOUR PRIEST!〉

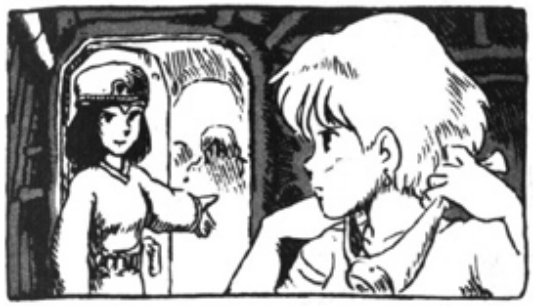

< HUH HUH HUH! I LIKE THIS GIRL! SHE'S MINE!>
RRRG!
<ANYBODY DON'T LIKE IT, JUST COME AN' TAKE HER!>
WHOK
AHUK HUK

FORGIVE ME, NAUSICAÄ!
KANG
I DON'T KNOW THIS TRIBE! THEY MUST HAVE BEEN DRIVEN FROM THEIR LANDS BY THE TORUMEKIAN ADVANCE!
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT, BUT THEIR ACCENT'S SO STRONG I CAN'T HALF UNDERSTAND THEM!
DAMN! I CAN BARELY BREATHE WITH THIS MASK ON!

IT'S THEIR *PRIEST*. ALL THE DOROK TRIBES ARE RULED BY PRIESTS...
THIS MAN... HE...
HE'S BLIND...!
YOU'RE NOT TORUMEKIAN... YOU DON'T HATE US.
YOU BURN WITH RAGE LIKE THE OHMU, BUT THAT'S BECAUSE YOU COME FROM A PROUD PEOPLE...
PLEASE... FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO FORGIVE THE INDISCRETIONS OF MY TRIBE. PLEASE BE OUR GUESTS...
GO WITH YOU, YOU MEAN. IN OTHER WORDS, PRISONERS.
heh heh


THIS SHIP... IT'S MADE OF WOOD!

Fssshh
Fssshh



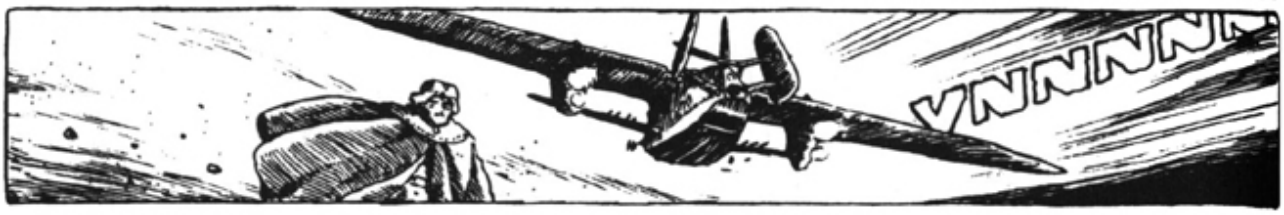
Huh? WOMEN ONLY...? THEN I HAVE TO GO THE OTHER WAY?

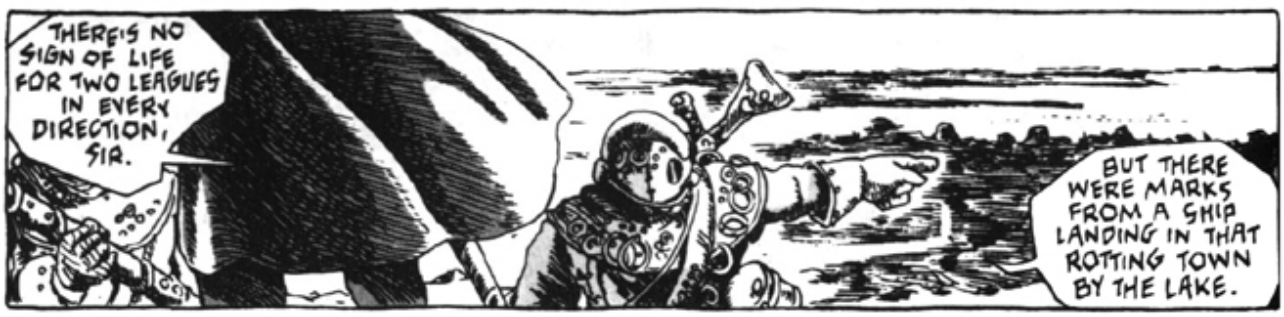
FROM WINDOW, I SEE YOU FIGHT. YOU VERY STRONG.
YOU SPEAK OUR TONGUE?
ONLY LITTLE. THAT SOLDIER NAMED OGIL. BAD MAN. NOBODY CRY FOR HIM.

STAY HERE. ONLY WOMEN, NO MAN COME. YOU SAFE.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THIS IS A MONITOR...
THEY ALL LOOK EXHAUSTED... IT'S LIKE A REFUGEE SHIP.

VNNNNNNNNNNNN


VNNNNNN


THERE'S NO SIGN OF LIFE FOR TWO LEAGUES IN EVERY DIRECTION, SIR.
BUT THERE WERE MARKS FROM A SHIP LANDING IN THAT ROTTING TOWN BY THE LAKE.

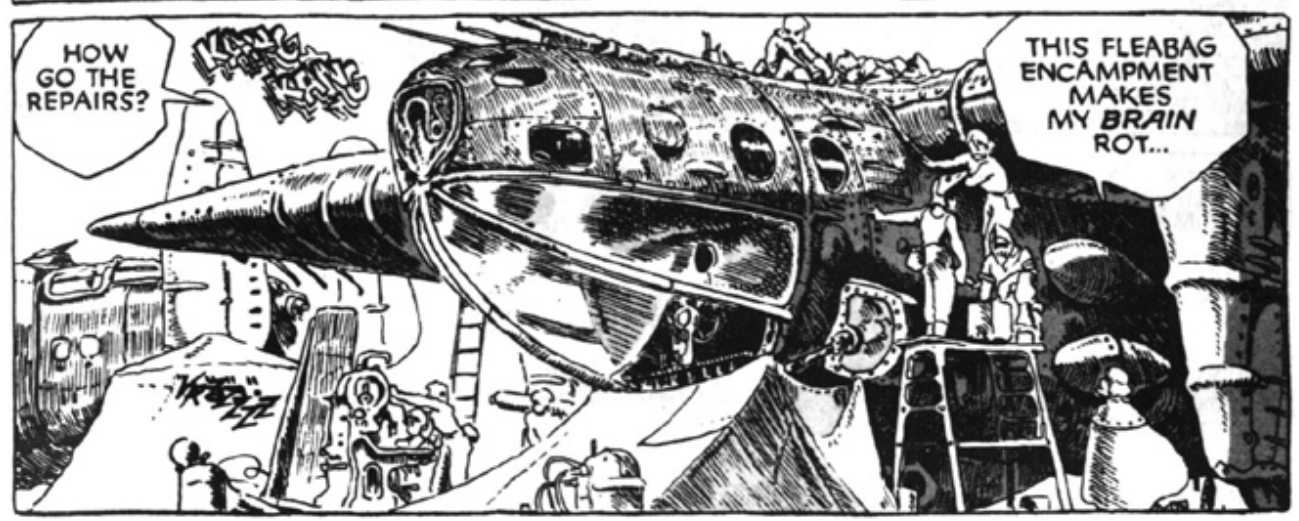
A DOROK SHIP?
CAN'T RIGHTLY SAY, YOUR HONOR. TOO MUCH ACID FOR OUR SLUGWORMS, BUT MY MEN ARE CHECKING, AT LEAST.

NO ONE SHOULD KNOW OF OUR PLANS -- STILL, IT NEVER HURTS TO BE CAREFUL...

IF YOU SPOT ANYTHING, LET ME KNOW IMMEDIATELY. I'LL SEND SOME WINE OUT FOR ALL OF YOU LATER.
THANK YOU, SIR.

THE ACID LAKES EVEN KEEP THE FUNGUS FROM GROWING, RIGHT HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROTWOOD.
CAN'T COMPLAIN... AT LEAST WE DON'T NEED OUR MASKS.

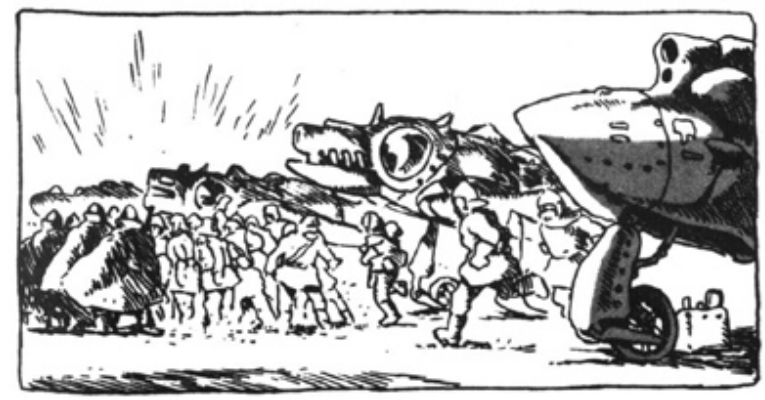
WHAT A DISGUSTING PLACE.
GRRCH
NOTHING HERE BUT DEAD INSECTS...


HOW GO THE REPAIRS?
THIS FLEABAG ENCAMPMENT MAKES MY *BRAIN* ROT...
ZZZ

JUST GIVE US ONE MORE DAY, SIR, WE'LL GET IT DONE.
BY THE WAY, SIR... HAVE YOU SERVED ON CORVETTES BEFORE?

SURE HAVE. SPENT TEN YEARS ON A REAL RUSTBUCKET, FROM WHEN I WAS SIXTEEN.
HAH! I KNEW IT!

I *FIGURED* YOU WEREN'T NO ORDINARY PILOT...
YOU'RE A DAMN SIGHT DIFFERENT FROM THOSE SNOOTY ARISTO STAFF OFFICERS...!



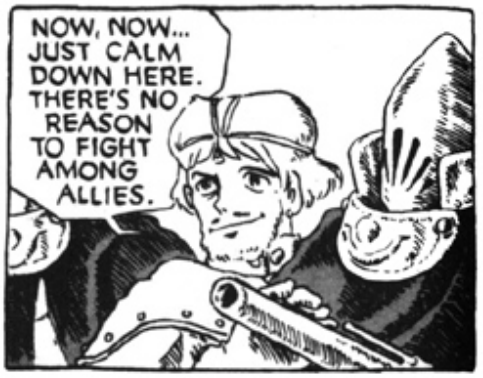
WHAT'S UP? A FIGHT...?
NO, SIR. IT'S THE TROOPERS FROM THE VALLEY OF WIND. THEY'VE BEEN IN AN UPROAR SINCE THIS MORNING.

SOMETHING ABOUT THEIR CHIEFTAIN NOT COMING BACK...

I TELL YOU, OUR PRINCESS ISN'T *DEAD!*
SHE'S JUST WAITING FOR US TO GO AND GET HER!

NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE FRONT FOR PERSONAL REASONS. PEOPLE HAVE DEFECTED BEFORE, IN THE NAME OF "RESCUE."

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?! AN INSULT TO OUR HONOR!
SHE MAY ONLY BE THE CHIEFTAIN OF A SMALL LAND, BUT SHE'S OUR *PRINCESS!* THINK YOU *NOTHING* OF THE LIFE OF OUR PRINCESS?!
SHE WAS LOST IN *COMBAT,* BY GOD!
YOU IMPERIAL GUARDS ARE GOING TOO FAR!


NOW, NOW... JUST CALM DOWN HERE. THERE'S NO REASON TO FIGHT AMONG ALLIES.

Hmm. WHAT YOU SAY MAKES GOOD SENSE TO ME.
RIGHT, THEN. I'LL TRY ASKING PERMISSION FROM HER HIGHNESS MYSELF -- JUST LEAVE IT TO ME.

THE VALLEY OF WIND...

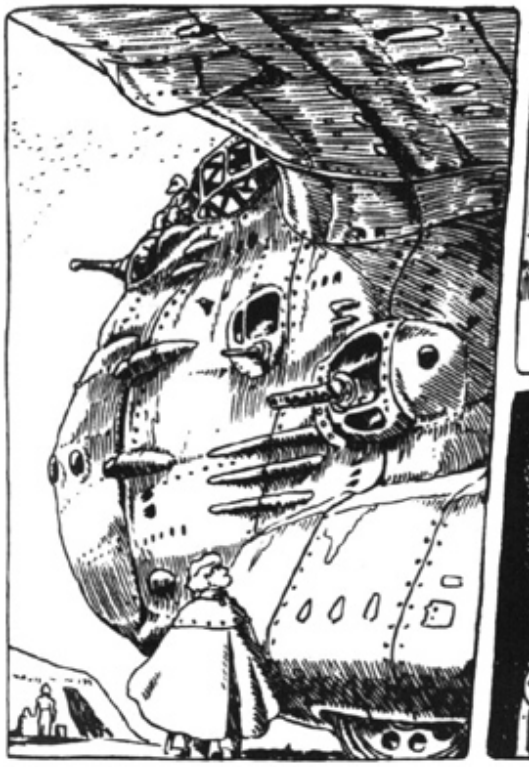
I'LL HEAR THEM. SEND IN THAT VASSAL.

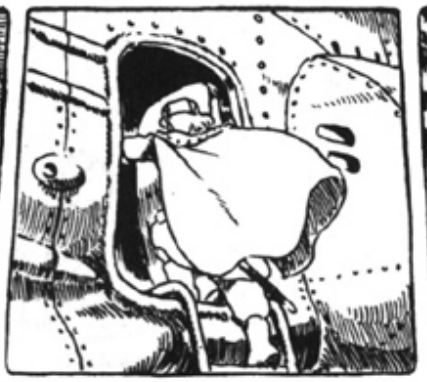
Oh, NO, YOUR HIGHNESS. YOU NEEDN'T PUT YOURSELF OUT... JUST YOUR PERMISSION IS ALL--

MUST I REPEAT MYSELF, KUROTOWA?!
I, *uh,* OH NO, MA'AM!

HER HIGHNESS WILL GRANT YOU AN AUDIENCE.
BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T OFFEND HER.

KUSHANA, YOU LITTLE VIXEN... YOUR EYES LIT UP THE MOMENT YOU HEARD "VALLEY OF WIND." SOMETHING'S GOING ON HERE...





IT'S THE DUTY OF A STAFF OFFICER TO KNOW *EVERYTHING,* ISN'T IT NOW... *heh, heh...*

WELL? TELL ME THE TRUTH, NOW-- IS SHE CARRYING IT ON HERSELF?

OR DID SHE LEAVE THE STONE SOMEWHERE IN THE VALLEY OF WIND?

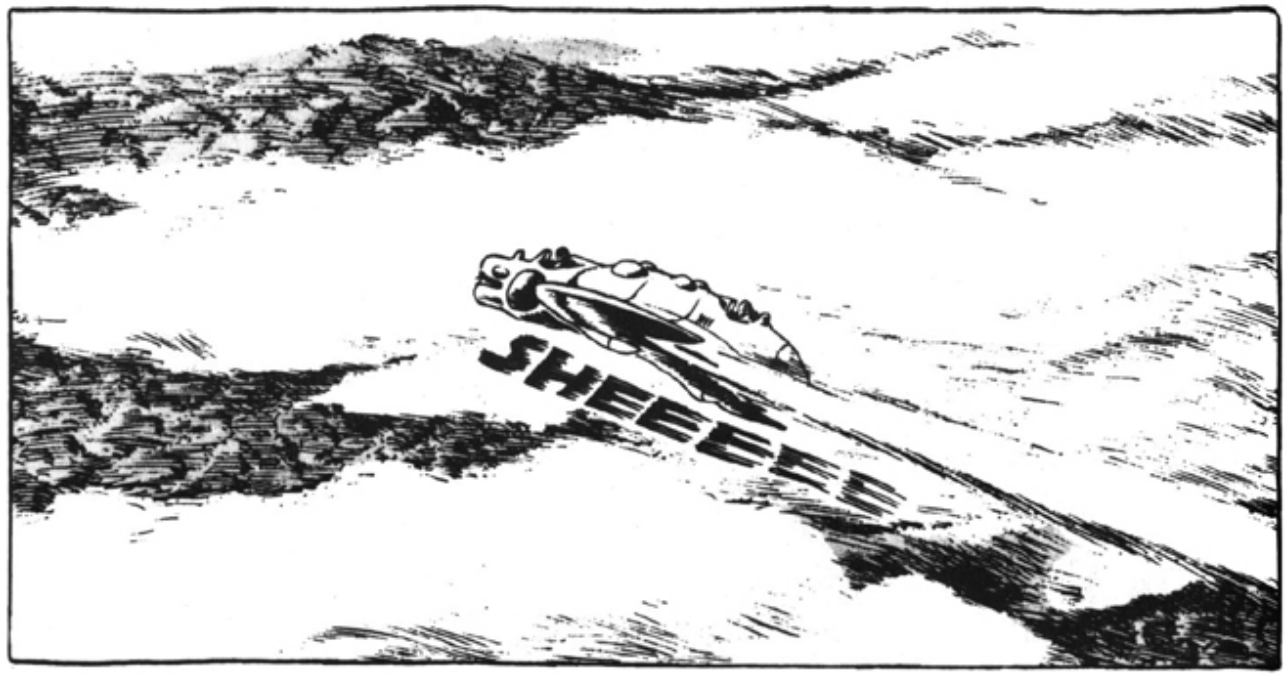
I KNOW THE STONE WAS TAKEN FROM THE WRECKAGE OF THAT PEJITEI SHIP.

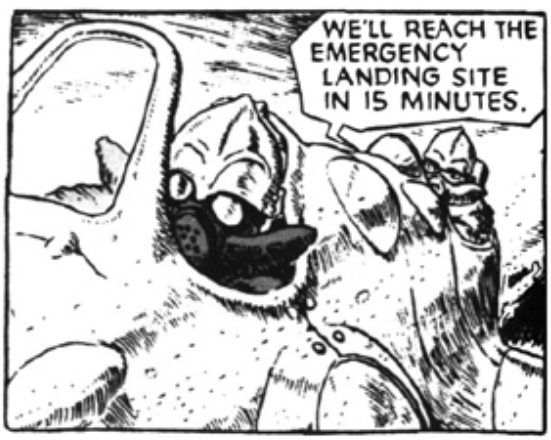
TELL ME THE TRUTH, MITO, AND I'LL IMMEDIATELY ORGANIZE A SEARCH PARTY.
OR WOULD YOU RATHER LEAVE YOUR LITTLE PRINCESS IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA OF CORRUPTION?
EVERY-THING HANGS ON YOUR REPLY...
ANSWER ME!!
WAHAHA HAHAA
I FEAR, MY LADY, THAT I'VE SOMEHOW FORGOTTEN MY MANNERS. THESE OLD BONES OF MINE HAVEN'T A CLUE HOW TO ANSWER SUCH TRICKY PUZZLES...
MYSELF, I'M NOTHING-- A NAMELESS VASSAL OF OUR PRINCESS. IT'S SURELY NOT MY PLACE TO WONDER WHAT SHE HAS IN HER POCKETS...
WOULD IT NOT PERHAPS BE WISER TO RESCUE OUR PRINCESS FIRST? THEN MIGHT THE TWO OF YOU DISCUSS THIS MATTER AT YOUR LEISURE.
Heh, heh, heh...
HUH!
Heh, heh, heh...
PERMISSION GRANTED TO DISPATCH YOUR GUN-SHIP ON A RESCUE MISSION. YOU MAY LEAVE.
YOUR MAJESTY!

KRASH!
CHOK
DOROKS!
DAMN!

SHUU
BLAM
PIOM
SHEERA
HEY! DID YOU HEAR A GUNSHOT JUST NOW?
SIR...?
JUST MY NERVES ...?
HEY! HEY, YOU MAGGOT-MEN! GOT A PRESENT FROM THE CHIEF OF STAFF HERE! IT'S WINE, YOU LOUTS!
WHAT TH--!

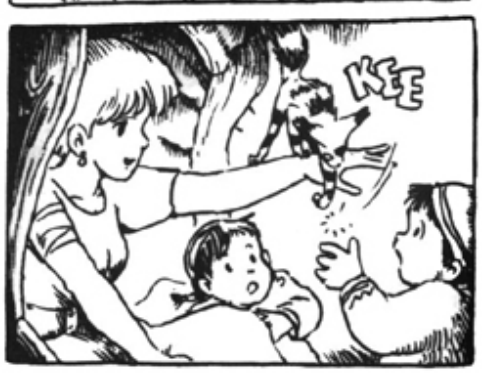
ENEMY ATTACK!


SHEEEE


WE'LL REACH THE EMERGENCY LANDING SITE IN 15 MINUTES.

I KNOW THE PRINCESS IS WAITING FOR US-- SHE'S NOT THE KIND OF PERSON TO BE SWALLOWED UP BY THE ROTWOOD.

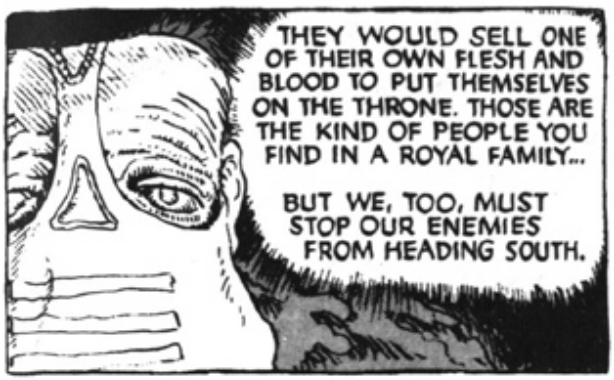
KNK KNK KNK

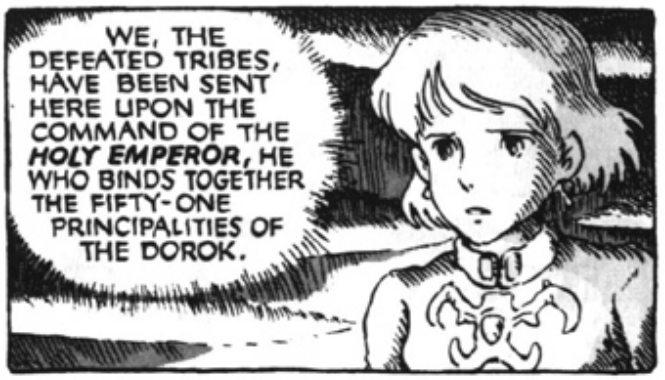

KEE

THANK YOU SO MUCH...
SHE SAY SHE SORRY YOU HAVE ONLY UNDER-SLIP. TAKE IT-- DON'T WORRY.
COME.
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
THE HOLY ONE SAY HE WANT TO MEET YOU.
YOU DO WELL. I WAS WANTING THAT DRESS.
THAT DRESS BEST CLOTHES OF OLD WOMAN'S DAUGHTER.
YOU LOOK LIKE DAUGHTER. SO YOU GET.
WHAT HAP-PENED TO HER?
SHE KILLED BY TORUMEKIA SOLDIERS.
OUR COUNTRY VERY SMALL. TORUMEKIA ARMY VERY BIG. SO MANY KILLED, MANY BURNED ALIVE...
WE HAVE NO COUNTRY GO HOME TO. BUT WE FIGHT STILL! LOOK...

DN DN DN
ALL SHIP OUR FRIEND. ALL GO FOR KILL TORUMEKIA SOLDIERS.
THEY'RE HEADING SOUTH-- THEY CAN'T KNOW ABOUT THE ENCAMPMENT...?
NAUSICAÄ!
NAUSICAÄ ...?
THEN IT'S TRUE!
POOR CHILD... YOUR PEOPLE ARE THERE AS WELL.
DO YOU MEAN TO KILL THEM ALL?
WE HAVE NO CHOICE. THE CIRCLE IS ALREADY CLOSED. WE'RE AT WAR.

WE KNEW BEFORE THE WAR BEGAN THAT PRINCESS KUSHANA WOULD HEAD SOUTH ACROSS THE FOREST.
HOW?! HOW COULD YOU HAVE KNOWN?
TO YOU I CAN SAY THIS-- THE INFORMATION CAME TO US FROM WITHIN THE TORUMEKIAN ROYAL FAMILY.


THEY WOULD SELL ONE OF THEIR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD TO PUT THEMSELVES ON THE THRONE. THOSE ARE THE KIND OF PEOPLE YOU FIND IN A ROYAL FAMILY...
BUT WE, TOO, MUST STOP OUR ENEMIES FROM HEADING SOUTH.


WE, THE DEFEATED TRIBES, HAVE BEEN SENT HERE UPON THE COMMAND OF THE HOLY EMPEROR, HE WHO BINDS TOGETHER THE FIFTY-ONE PRINCIPALITIES OF THE DOROK.

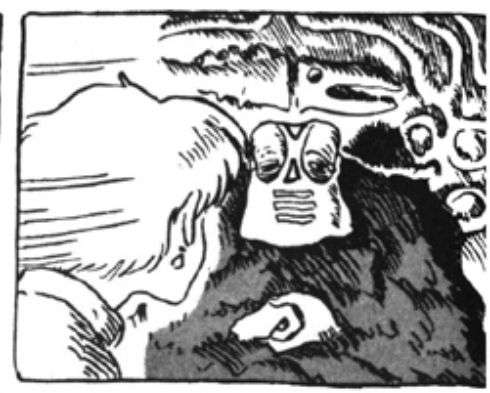
THIS... THIS IS MADNESS. WHAT CAN THIS WAR ACCOMPLISH? WHY AM I HERE?!

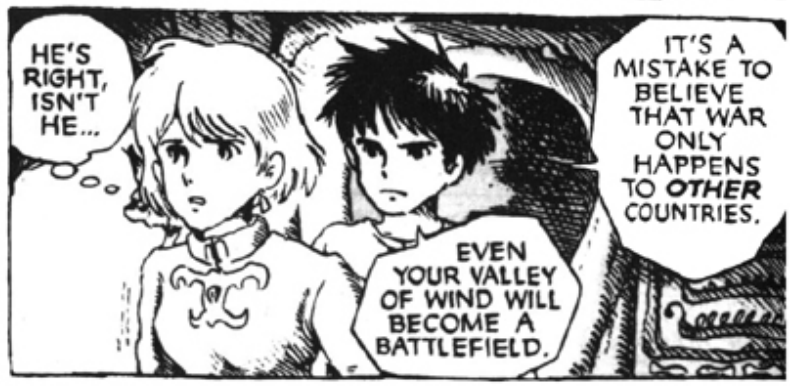
< HOLY ONE, IT IS ALL AS I HAVE SAID.>
< THE STATES OF THE PERIPHERY ARE LIKE THIS GIRL... THEY FIGHT UNDER THE VAI EMPEROR AGAINST THEIR WILL.>

< THERE IS NO REASON FOR YOUR PEOPLE AND US OF THE PERIPHERY TO DO BATTLE.>

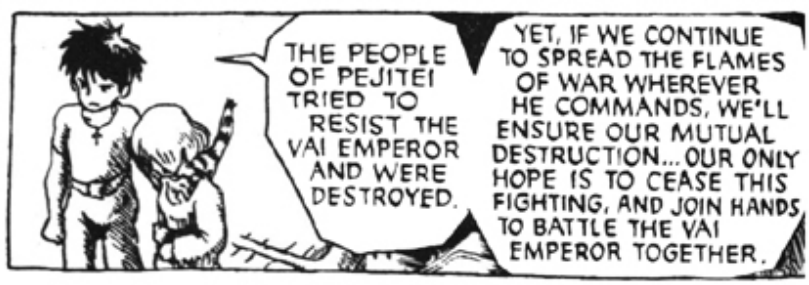
< GIVE ME TIME, HOLY ONE.>
< I'LL ROUT KUSHANA'S ARMY, AND PERSUADE THE PERIPHERY FORCES TO WITHDRAW.>

(OR... HAS THE HOLY EMPEROR HANDED DOWN *OTHER* ORDERS AS WELL...?!)
(CRUSH PRINCESS KUSHANA, THEN MOVE NORTH TO TAKE THE PERIPHERY IN PLACE OF YOUR LOST HOME-LANDS?)
(SO *THAT'S* IT! THAT'S WHY YOU'VE COME WITH YOUR WOMEN AND CHILDREN! TO COLONIZE *OUR* LANDS...!)

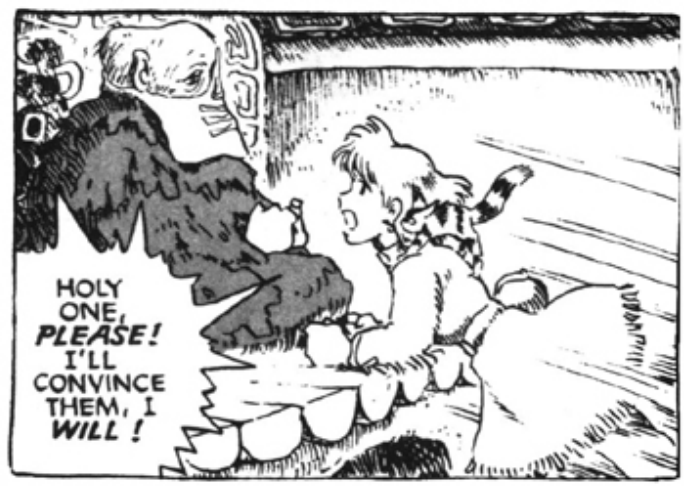



HE'S RIGHT, ISN'T HE...
IT'S A MISTAKE TO BELIEVE THAT WAR ONLY HAPPENS TO *OTHER* COUNTRIES.
EVEN YOUR VALLEY OF WIND WILL BECOME A BATTLEFIELD.

I... I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHAT WAR WAS *REALLY* LIKE...

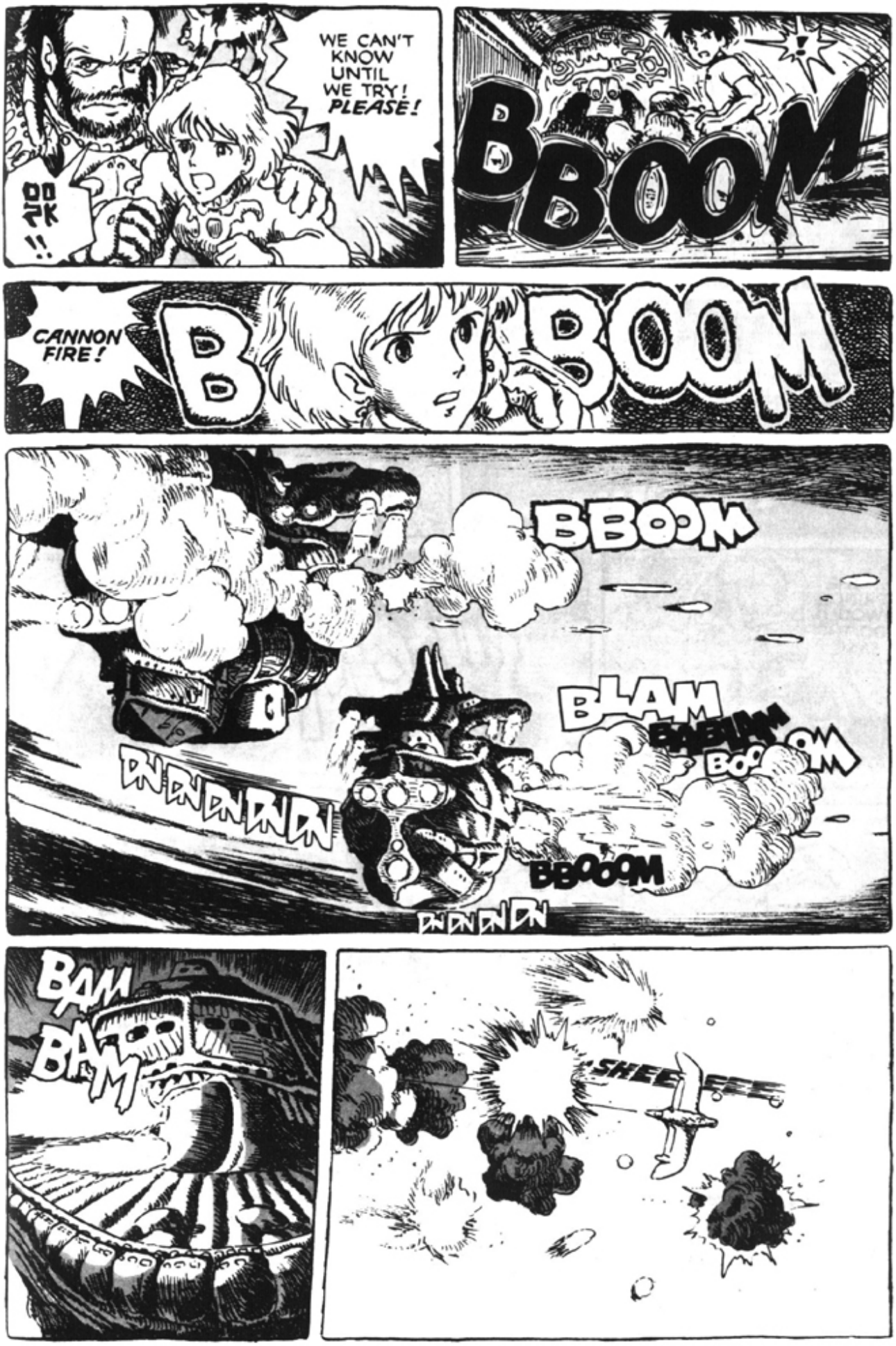

THE PEOPLE OF PEJITEI TRIED TO RESIST THE VAI EMPEROR AND WERE DESTROYED.
YET, IF WE CONTINUE TO SPREAD THE FLAMES OF WAR WHEREVER HE COMMANDS, WE'LL ENSURE OUR MUTUAL DESTRUCTION... OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO CEASE THIS FIGHTING, AND JOIN HANDS TO BATTLE THE VAI EMPEROR TOGETHER.

LET ME GO TO THEM!


HOLY ONE, *PLEASE!* I'LL CONVINCE THEM, I *WILL!*

IT'S JUST AS ASBEL SAYS-- WE *HAVE* TO STOP THIS FOOLISH WAR.
LET ME GO TO THEM!

IT IS TRAGIC, MY DAUGHTER... BUT ALL IS TOO LATE. THIS AIR-MONITOR IS PART OF THE LAST WAVE-- BY NOW, FIGHTING HAS ALREADY BEGUN BESIDE THE ACID LAKES.


WE CAN'T KNOW UNTIL WE TRY! PLEASE!
OK!!
BBOOM
CANNON FIRE!
BBOOM
BBOOM
BLAM
BABLAM
BOOOM
DN DN DN DN DN
BBOOOM
DN DN DN DN
BAM
BAM
SHEE

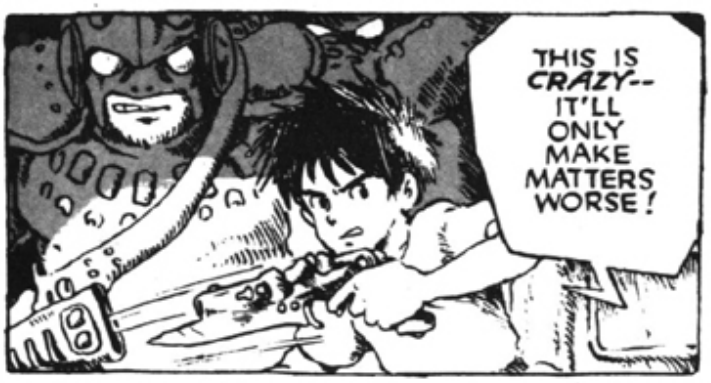
BRAM
KOOM
DAMNATION! WE GO LOOKING FOR THE PRINCESS AND FIND A DOROK BATTLE FLEET INSTEAD!
BROOMM
SHEEOOOUU
THEY MUST INTEND TO ATTACK THE ENCAMPMENT! WE HAVE TO ENGAGE THEM!
KOOM
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PRINCESS?! IF WE'RE SHOT DOWN...
THE PRINCESS WOULD DO THE SAME!
KHOOM
<TWO FULL BROADSIDES AND YOU DIDN'T HIT THEM ONCE!>
<YOU BUMBLING IDIOTS!>
DN DN DN DN
<HOLY ONE, PLEASE COME TO THE BRIDGE!>

<IT'S A TORUMEKIAN GUNSHIP!>
<THEY'RE DIRECTLY OVERHEAD!>
IT'S MITO!
<YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED UP HERE!>

DON'T MOVE!
STOP FIGHTING IMMEDIATELY! DO AS I SAY, OR YOUR PRIEST DIES!

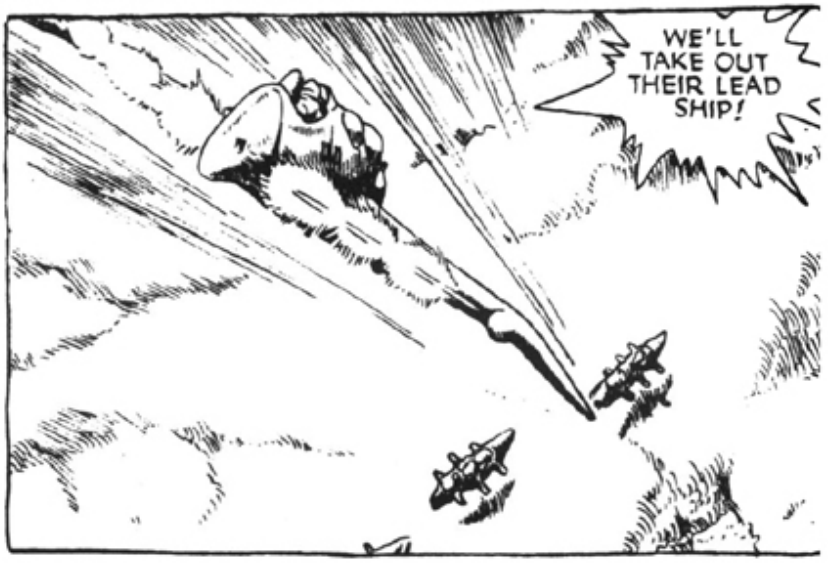
NAUSICAÄ! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

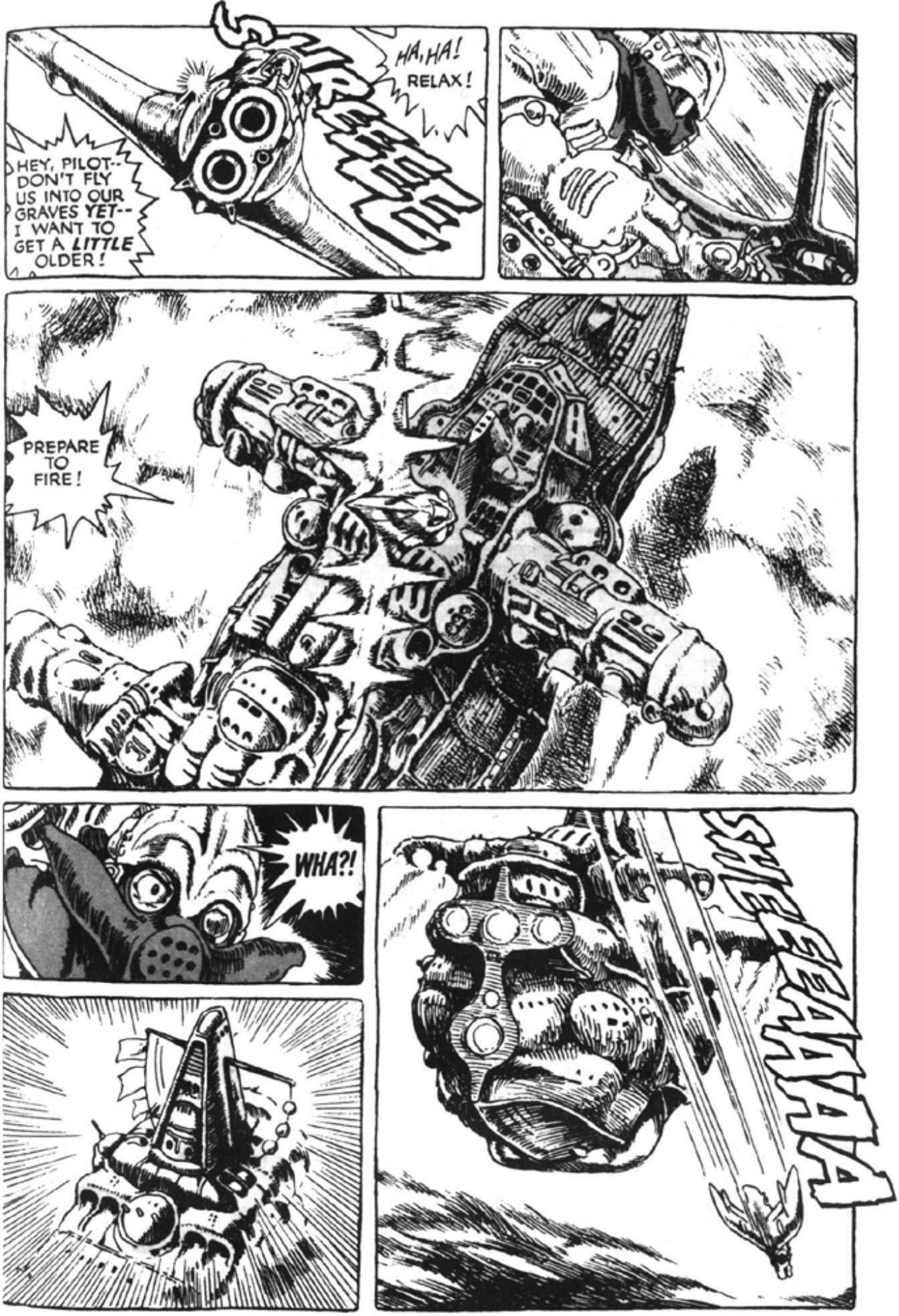
GET HIS GUN! QUICKLY!


THIS IS CRAZY-- IT'LL ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE!

PLEASE, HOLY ONE-- DO AS I SAY!

DAUGHTER, THINK YOU THAT I AM ONE WHO TREASURES HIS OWN LIFE...?
NO, I DON'T... BUT I DO THINK YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO DIE. THE FATE OF YOUR TRIBE RESTS ON YOUR SHOULDERS.
THAT GUNSHIP CAN PULVERIZE THIS SHIP WITH A SINGLE SHOT! YOU MUST ACT QUICKLY-- THERE'S NO TIME!


WE'LL TAKE OUT THEIR LEAD SHIP!

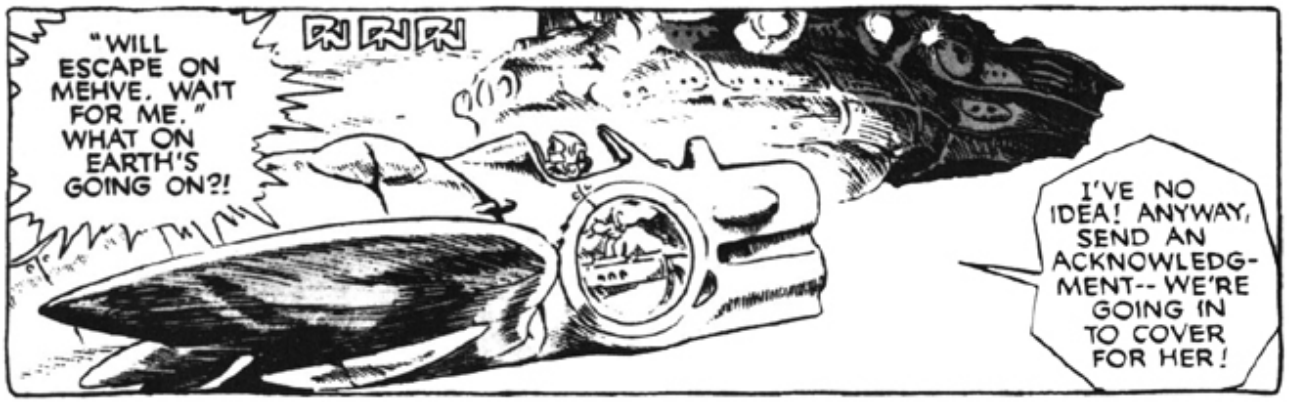

HEY, PILOT-- DON'T FLY US INTO OUR GRAVES YET-- I WANT TO GET A LITTLE OLDER!
HA, HA! RELAX!
PREPARE TO FIRE!
WHA?!
SHEEEAAAA

WHAT'S WRONG?! WHY DIDN'T YOU FIRE?!
SH EEEEEEE
THEY'VE RUN UP A WHITE FLAG!

CHK CHK
CHK

A SIGNAL LAMP...

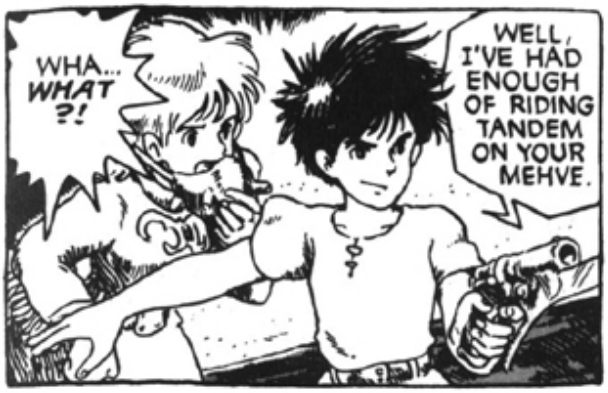
CHK CHK
THIS... IS... NAU... SI... NAUSICAÄ!
IT'S OUR PRINCESS!


"WILL ESCAPE ON MEHVE. WAIT FOR ME." WHAT ON EARTH'S GOING ON?!
I'VE NO IDEA! ANYWAY, SEND AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT-- WE'RE GOING IN TO COVER FOR HER!

FRIEND

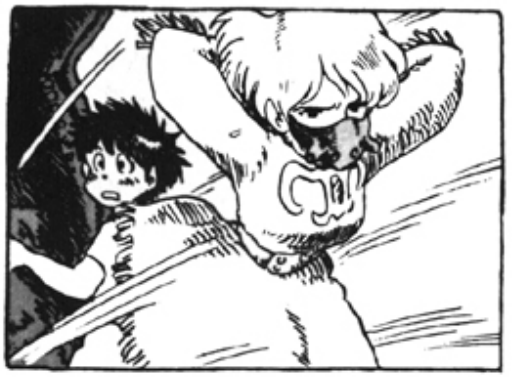
FORGIVE MY VIOLENCE, HOLY ONE...
BUT I HAVE TO STOP THE FIGHTING, AT ANY COST!

HERE'S A MASK. MEHVE'S READY TO GO.
ASBEL, YOU GET ON FIRST.
I'M NOT GOING.

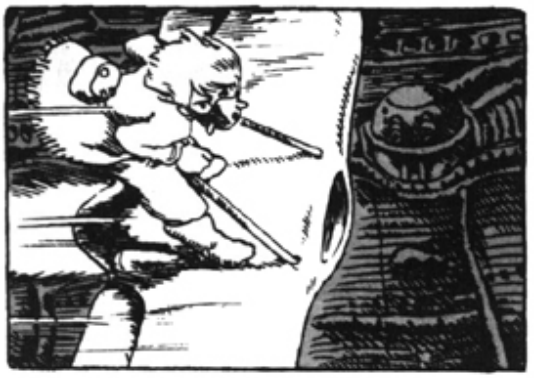

WHA... WHAT ?!
WELL, I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF RIDING TANDEM ON YOUR MEHVE.

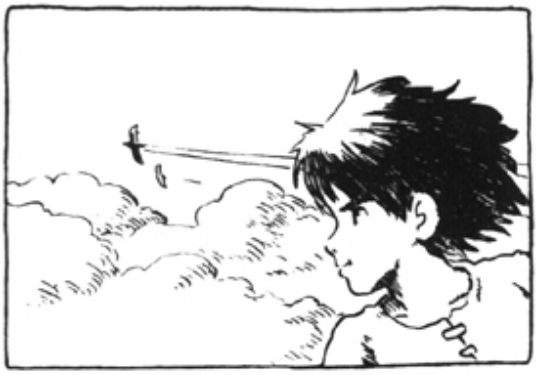
GO, NOW, NAUSICAÄ.
CONVINCE THEM ALL. I'LL DO MY BEST HERE.

.....
.....



SHOOM





WELL, THEN...
ABOUT THAT DISCUSSION WE WERE HAVING...

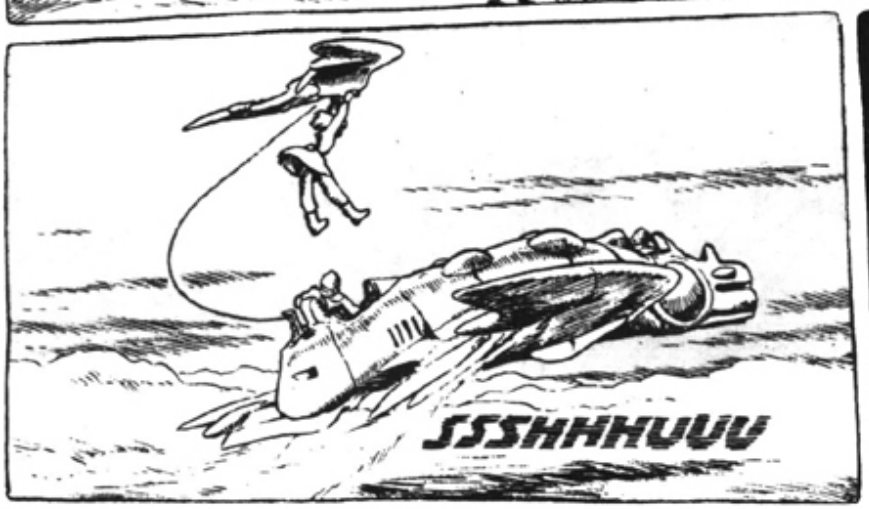
WHOK
WHOO
<NOW, NOW. DON'T KILL HIM-- JUST TEACH HIM A LITTLE LESSON.>

HO, HO... SHE'S OFF, LIKE A TINY SWALLOW.

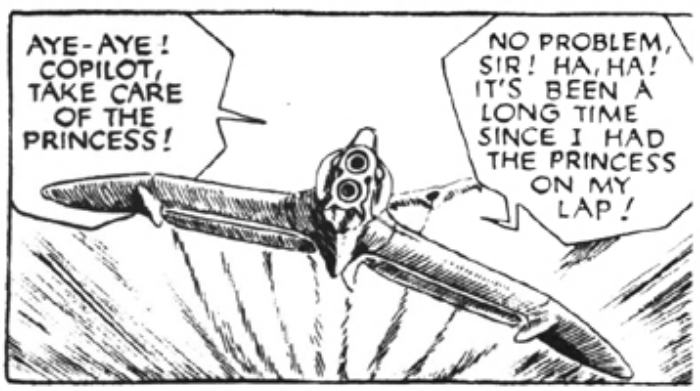
A GOOD CHILD... A MIX OF TENDERNESS AND COURAGE, VERY DEEP... I HOPE SHE DOESN'T DIE AN IGNOBLE DEATH...

WELL, WELL, EVERYBODY-- LET US CONTINUE THE ADVANCE AS PLANNED.
KNK KNK KNK KNK

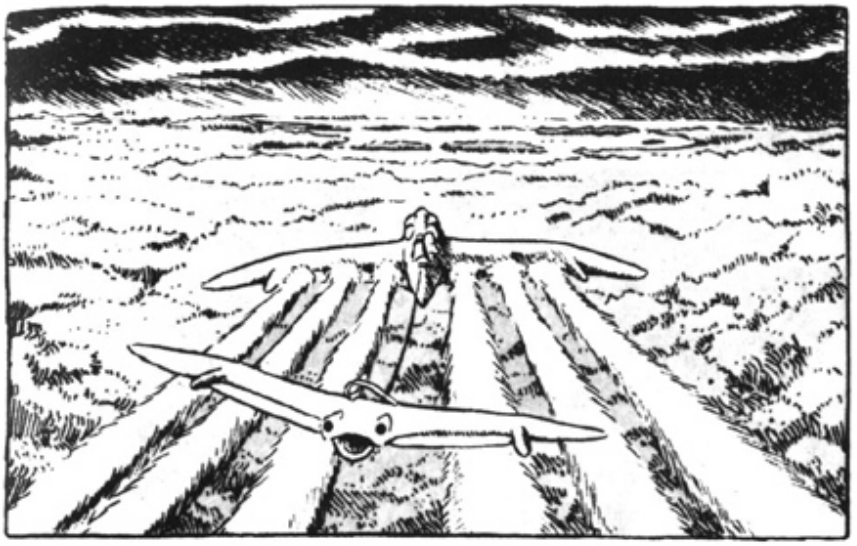
HOOK READY! MAINTAIN SPEED!
READY FOR BOARDING.


SSSHHHUUU

THANK YOU, BOTH OF YOU!
BACK TO THE CAMP, QUICKLY! COMBAT CRUISE SPEED!


AYE-AYE! COPILOT, TAKE CARE OF THE PRINCESS!
NO PROBLEM, SIR! HA, HA! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I HAD THE PRINCESS ON MY LAP!

SHREEEEEE

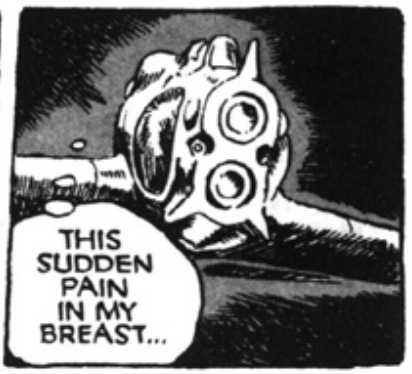


THREE MINUTES TO THE ACID LAKES!

THE ROTWOOD'S BEGINNING TO THIN, PRINCESS. NO ENEMY IN SIGHT.

THE MIASMA'S GETTING WEAKER...

PRINCESS ?!
WHSSSS
PRINCESS! IS SOME-THING WRONG?


THIS SUDDEN PAIN IN MY BREAST...

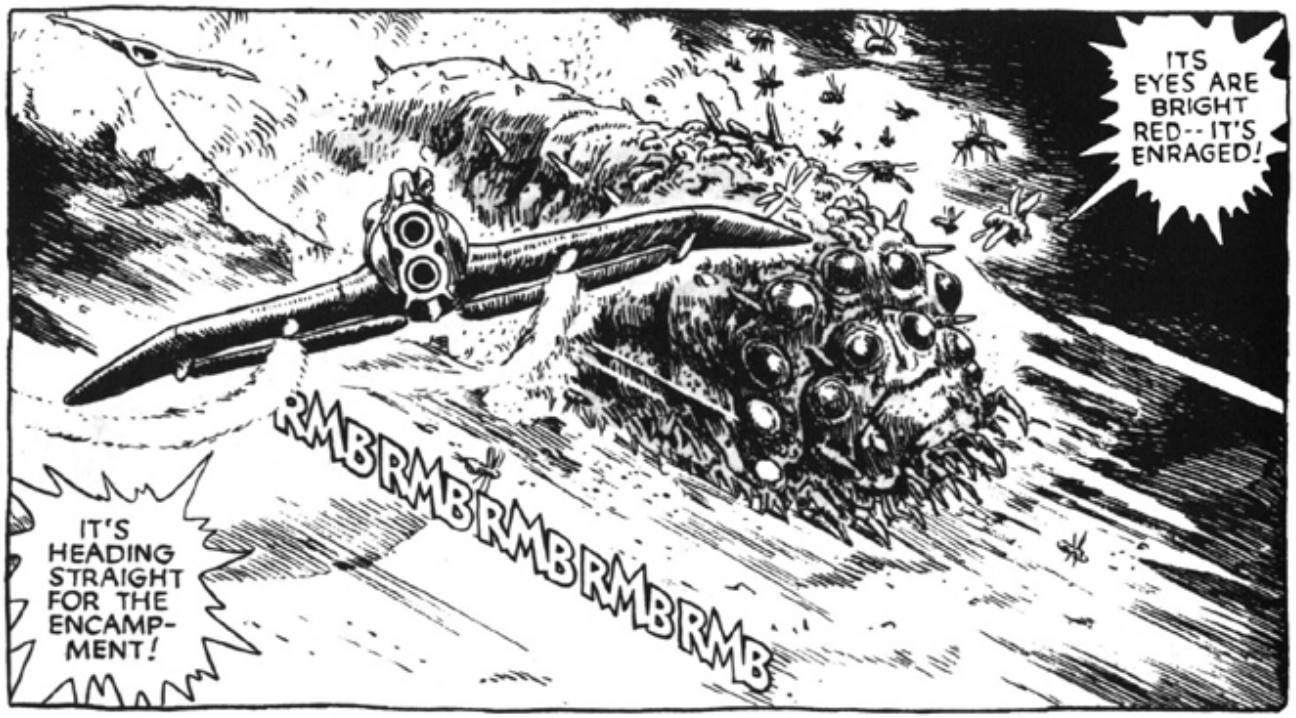
IT'S HATRED! THE AIR IS FULL OF THE VOICES OF HATE!

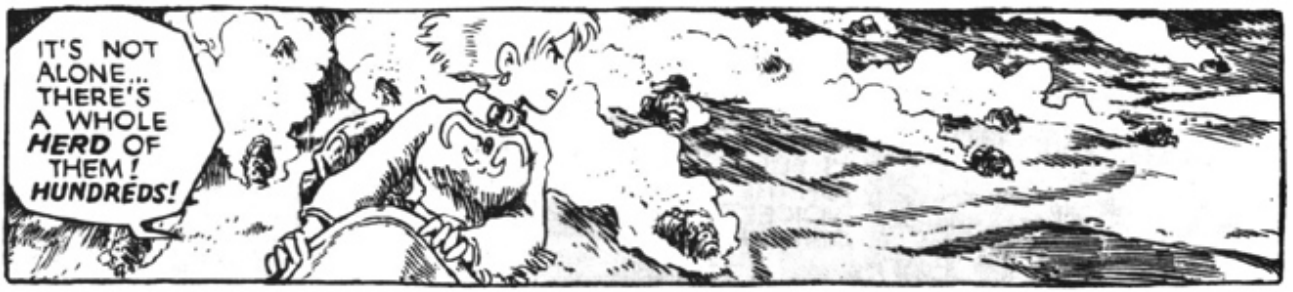
OHMU ...?!
IT CAN'T BE... BUT...

PRINCESS! WHAT ARE YOU--

MITO! OVER THERE!

RMBRMB

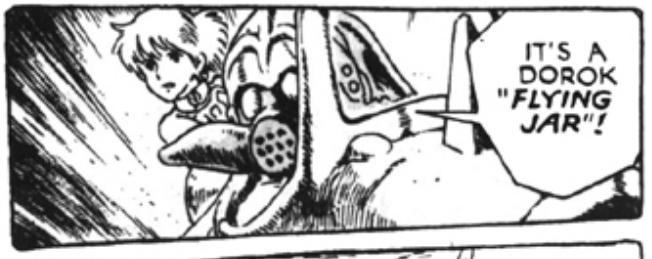

ITS EYES ARE BRIGHT RED--IT'S ENRAGED!
RMBRMBRMBRMBRMB
IT'S HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE ENCAMPMENT!

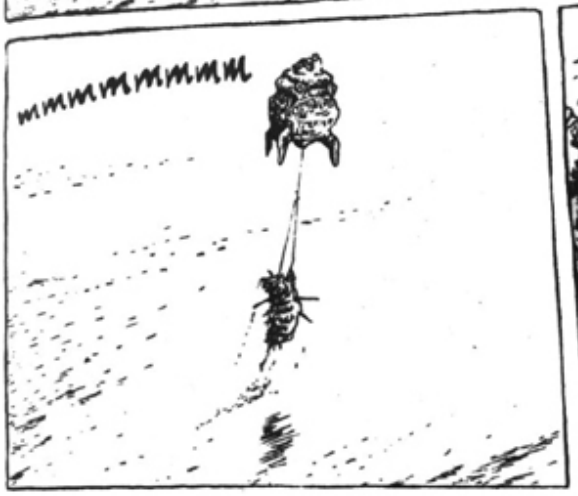

IT'S NOT ALONE... THERE'S A WHOLE HERD OF THEM! HUNDREDS!

RMBRMB

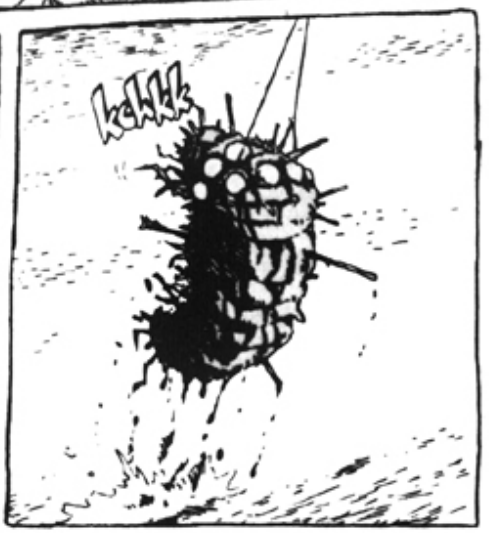
IS THIS THE TRAP THE DOROKS SPOKE OF...? BUT HOW COULD THEY GET THE OHMU TO...?

PRINCESS! UP AHEAD!

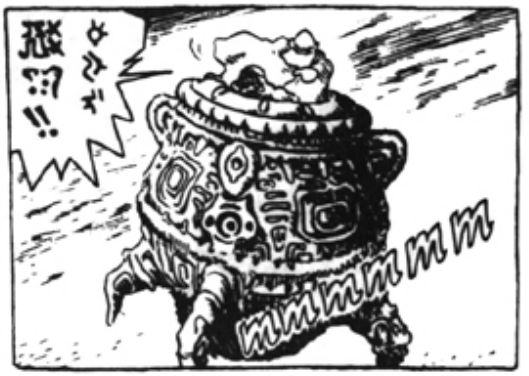

IT'S A DOROK "FLYING JAR"!



chk

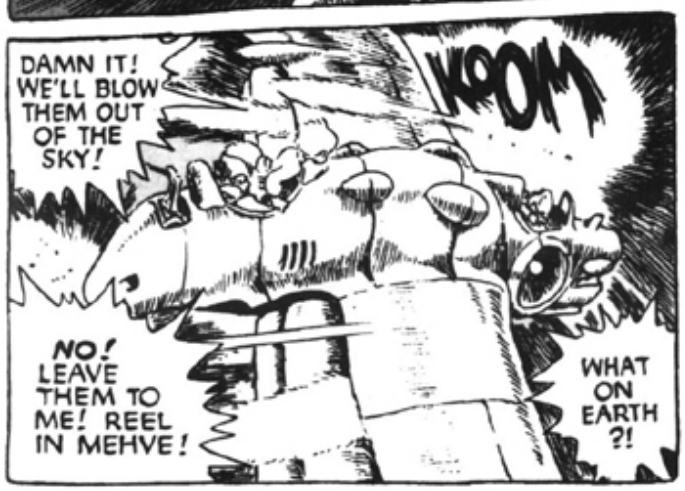

kchkk

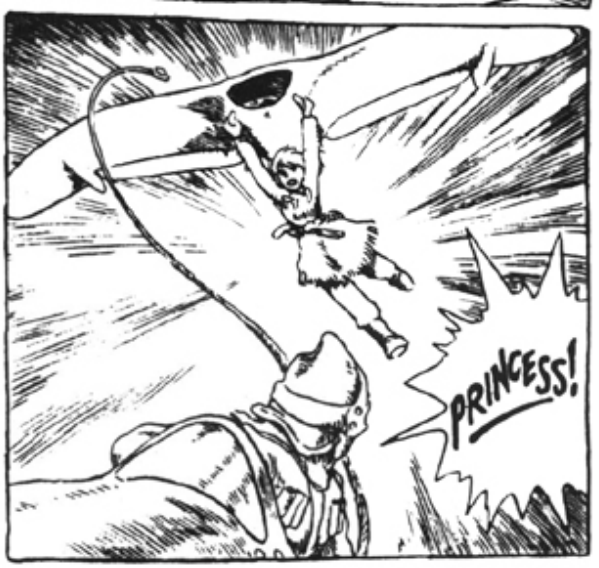
A BABY OHMU!
THEY'RE TORTURING IT TO DEATH! USING IT TO DRAW THE OTHER OHMU TO THE ENCAMPMENT!
HOW COULD THE DOROKS DO SUCH A TERRIBLE THING! USING THE OHMU'S DEVOTION TO THEIR COMRADES AS A WEAPON IN THEIR AWFUL WAR!


mmmmm

BAM BAM

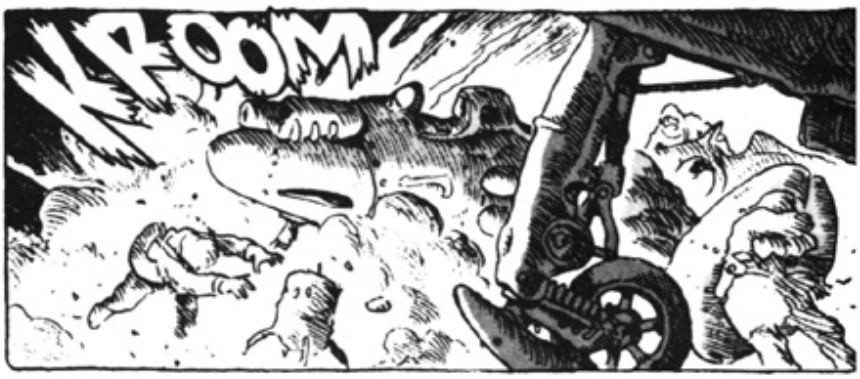
YOU TWO WARN THE OTHERS! IF THEY DON'T TAKE OFF IMMEDIATELY, THEY'LL BE WIPED OUT!


DAMN IT! WE'LL BLOW THEM OUT OF THE SKY!
KOOM
NO! LEAVE THEM TO ME! REEL IN MEHVE!
WHAT ON EARTH ?!


PRINCESS!

WRAM

EEEEEEEEE
SKREEEEEE
VEEEEEEEE
BKOOM
EEEEE

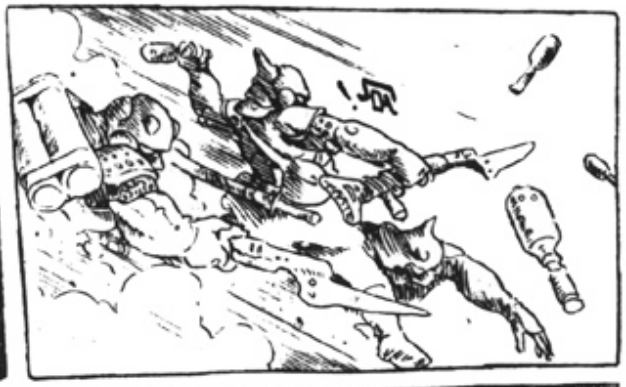

KROOM

INCOMING!!
BKOOM

BAM
BAM
BBAM
BAM
DOROKS!

BLAM

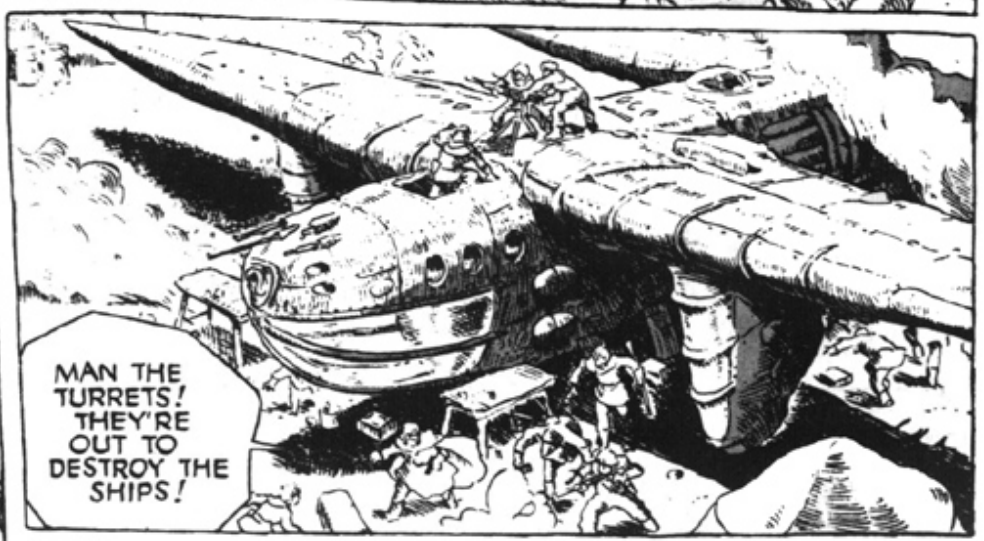
BLAM BLAM
FORM A RIFLE LINE! FIRE AT WILL!



PUT OUT THE FIRE! PROTECT THE BARGE!
THOSE ARE DOROK SUICIDE TROOPS! THEY'RE CARRYING EXPLOSIVES!

CHOK
BLAM
KBM
DON'T LET THEM NEAR THE SHIPS! HOLD THE LINE!

WHOOM


MAN THE TURRETS! THEY'RE OUT TO DESTROY THE SHIPS!

BLAST! WHAT WERE THOSE DAMN MAGGOTMEN SENTRIES DOING?! THEY'VE SCUTTLED MY PLANS!

YOUR HIGHNESS! FORGIVE ME! THE WORM-HANDLERS...

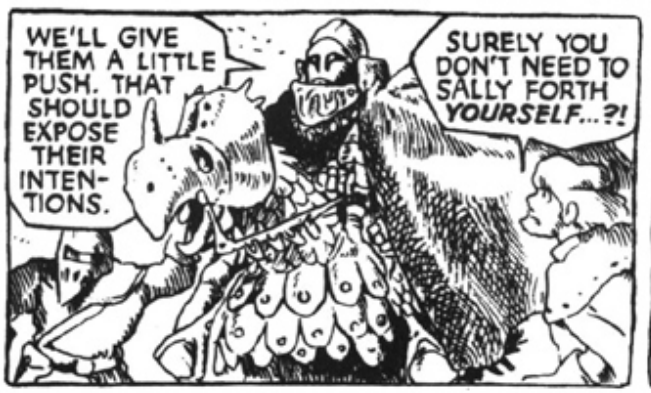
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR EXCUSES, KUROTOWA. HOW DO YOU READ THE BATTLE?
EX-EXCUSE ME, YOUR HIGH-NESS?

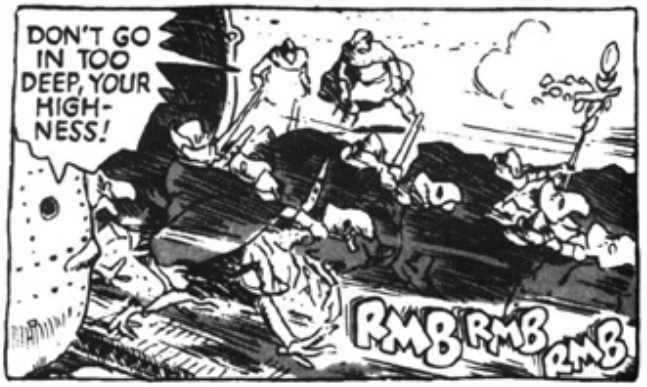
THEIR NUMBERS SEEM INSIGNIFICANT. THEY HAVE NO HEAVY WEAPONRY. YET WHY DIDN'T THEY LAUNCH A *NIGHT ATTACK*, THE DOROK SPECIALITY?
THIS MAD ASSAULT... THEY ALMOST SEEM AFRAID THAT WE'LL TAKE OFF, DON'T YOU THINK?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YES... BUT THEY'RE *BARBARIANS*. THERE'S REALLY NO TELLING WHAT THEY'LL--

THE DOROK ARE SUPERB SOLDIERS. THEY NEVER RISK HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT WITHOUT GOOD REASON.

YOU THINK IT'S A DIVERSION? A MIGHTY ARMY LIES HIDDEN BEHIND OUR BACKS?

BRAKKA
OR PERHAPS THIS IS JUST A CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH A RECONNAISSANCE UNIT. BUT IT SMELLS SUSPICIOUS...

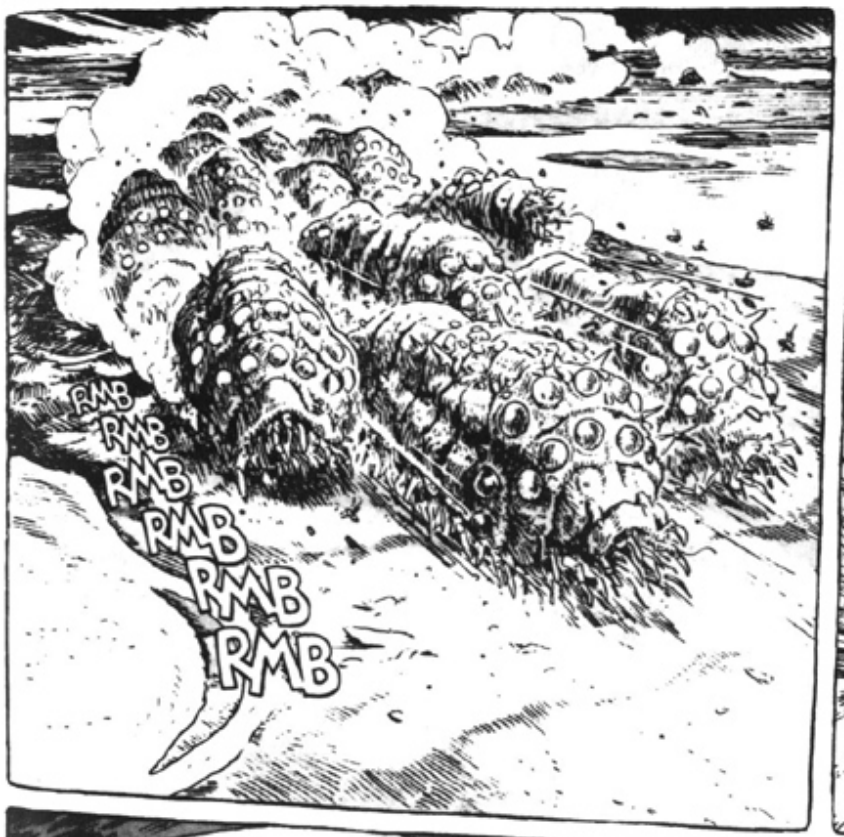

WE'LL GIVE THEM A LITTLE PUSH. THAT SHOULD EXPOSE THEIR INTEN-TIONS.
SURELY YOU DON'T NEED TO SALLY FORTH *YOURSELF...?!*


DON'T GO IN TOO DEEP, YOUR HIGH-NESS!
RMB RMB RMB

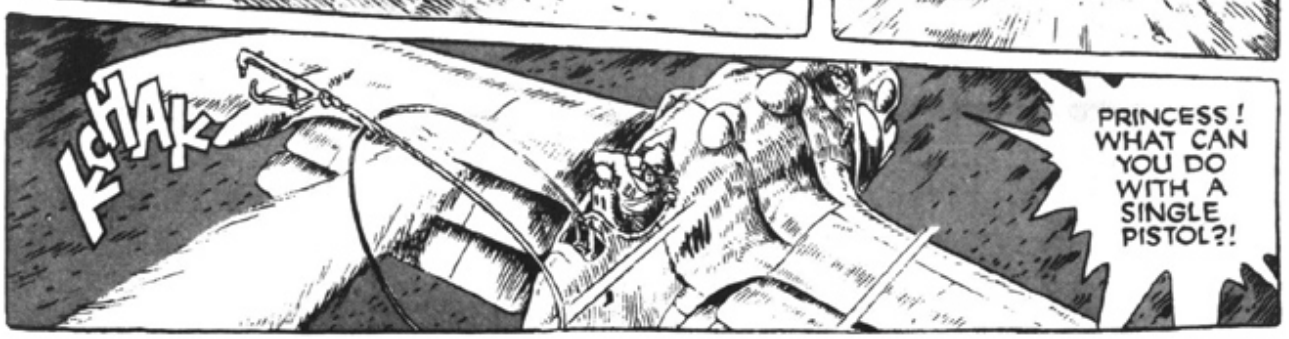
RMB RMB

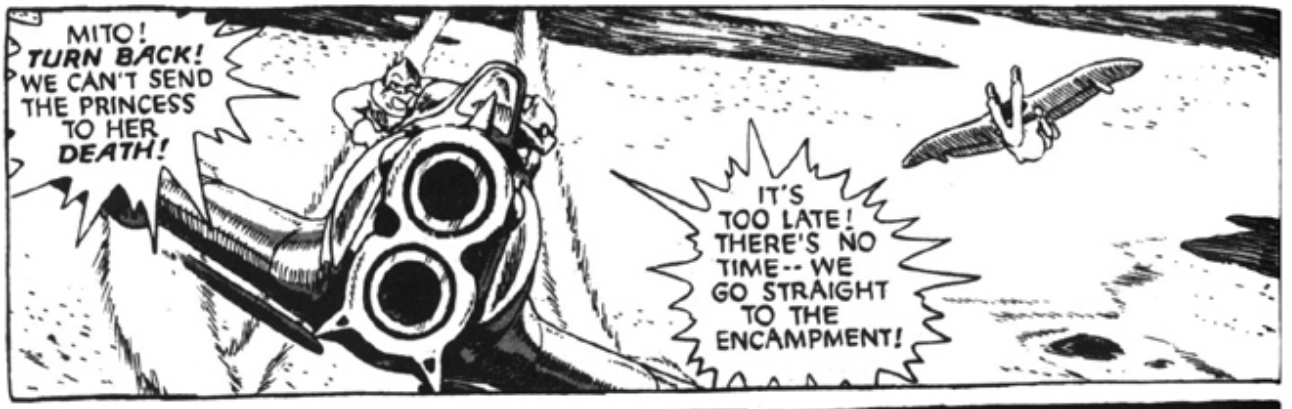
YOU'RE A SHARP ONE, ALL RIGHT, KUSHANA! CATCHING *THAT MUCH* FROM A FEW SMALL TROOP MOVEMENTS... I'M IMPRESSED.
zingg
BUT I DOUBT YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN BETRAYED BY THE BROTHERS WHO SHARE YOUR OWN BLOOD...

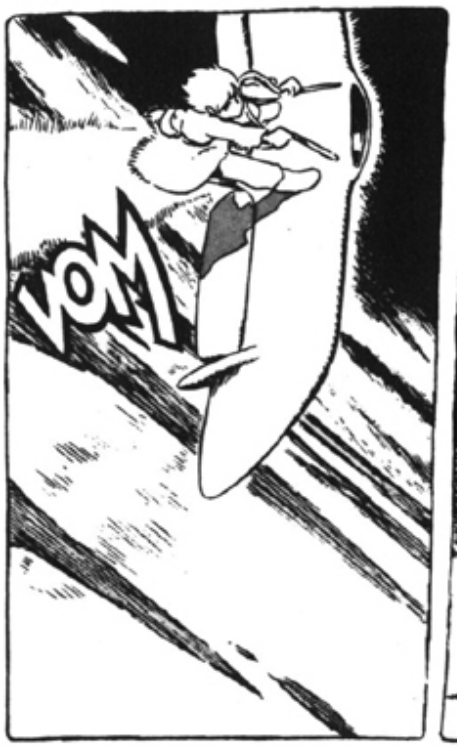
EEYAH!
KOOM
FIRST TO GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE!

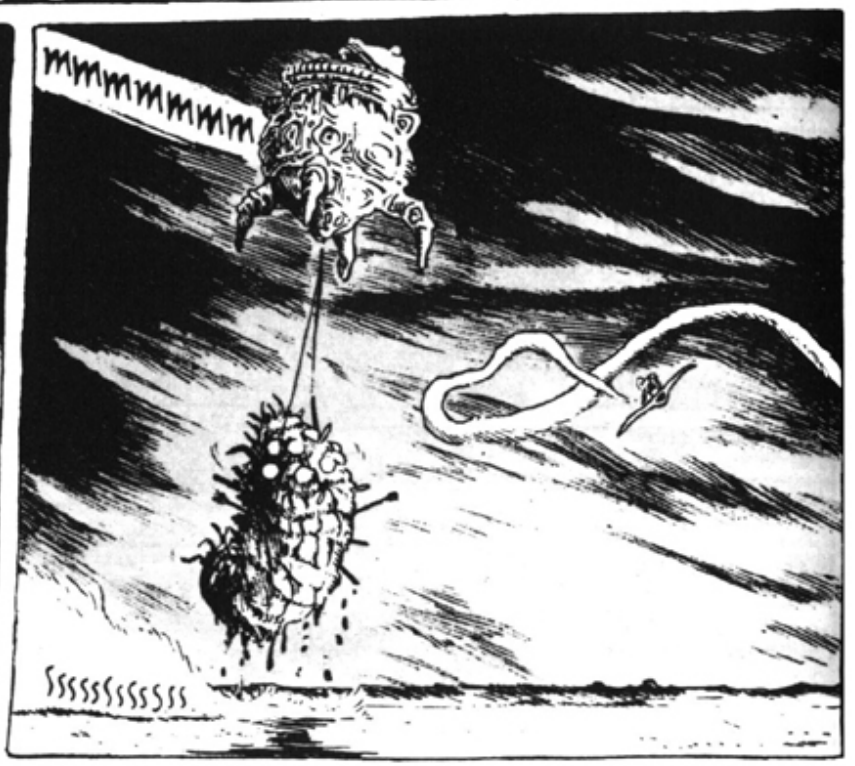

RMB
RMB
RMB
RMB
RMB
RMB

RMB RMB


FCHAK
PRINCESS! WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A SINGLE PISTOL?!

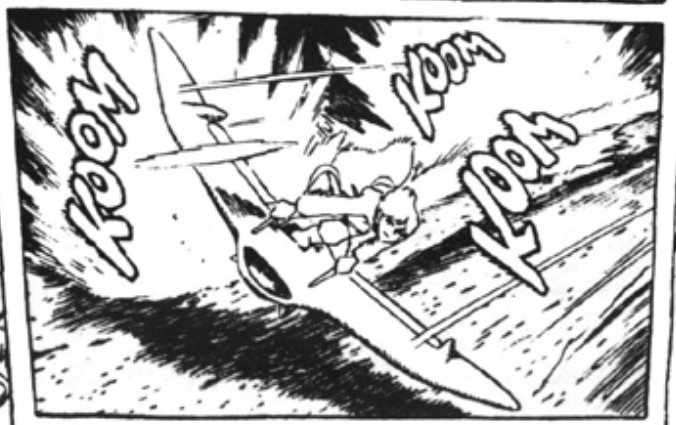

MITO! TURN BACK! WE CAN'T SEND THE PRINCESS TO HER DEATH!
IT'S TOO LATE! THERE'S NO TIME-- WE GO STRAIGHT TO THE ENCAMPMENT!


VOM


MMMMMMMM
SSSSSSSSSS

BRAKKA

KOOM
BAM
BAM

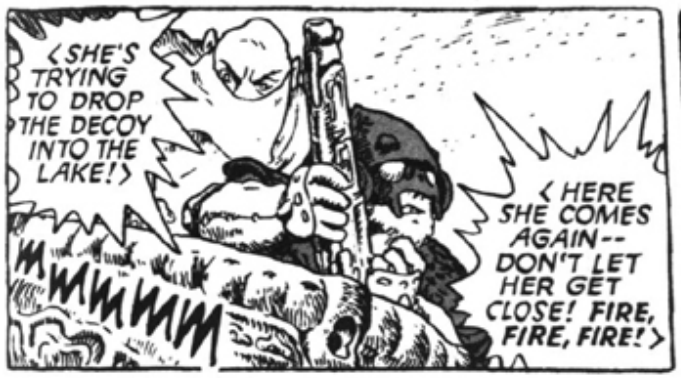

KOOM
KOOM
KOOM

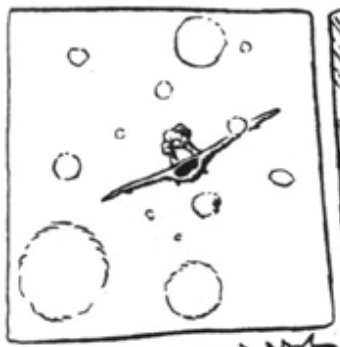
< SHE'S INTO OUR BLIND SPOT! >
MMMMMMMMM

WHOOSH

SPAK

<WHO THE DEVIL IS SHE?! SHE SHOT THE ROPE IN HALF!>


<SHE'S TRYING TO DROP THE DECOY INTO THE LAKE!>
MMMMMM
<HERE SHE COMES AGAIN-- DON'T LET HER GET CLOSE! FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!>



<DAMN! SHE DIVES LIKE A HAWK!>
WHUSH

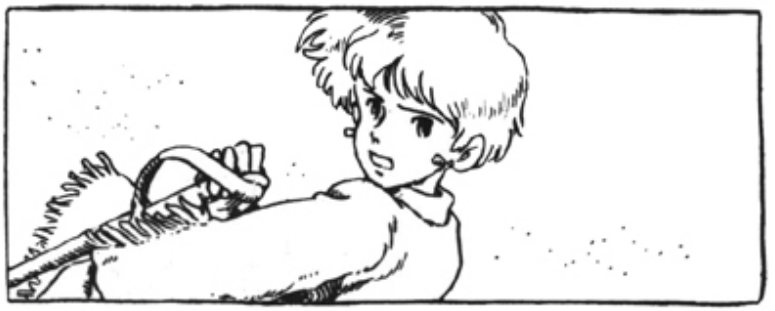
BAM

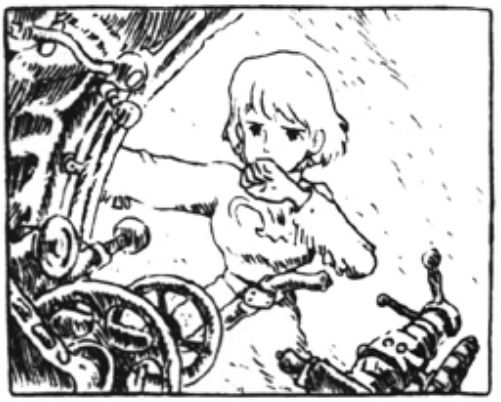
BRAKKA

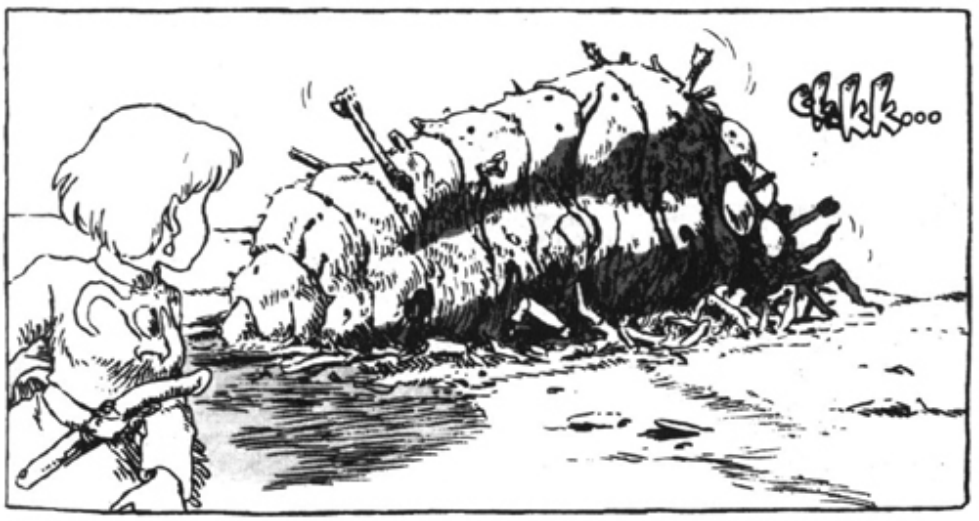
SPAH

BLAM BLAM
<THIS IS HOPELESS! I'LL PUT THE WORM DOWN ON THAT ISLAND!>
BRAKKA BRAKKA
WHOP
<WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! RELEASE THE ROPE!!>
<I CAN'T! IT'S JAMMED!>
whungg
KNG
<HURRY UP!>
!

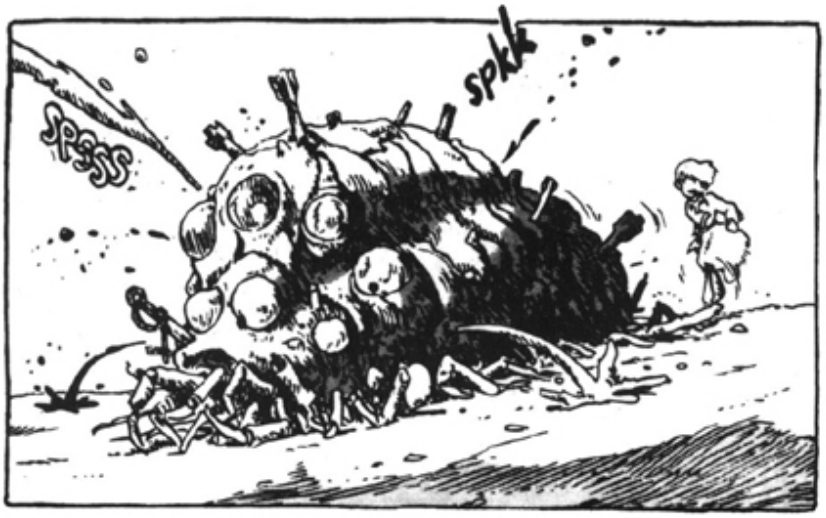
SKSS



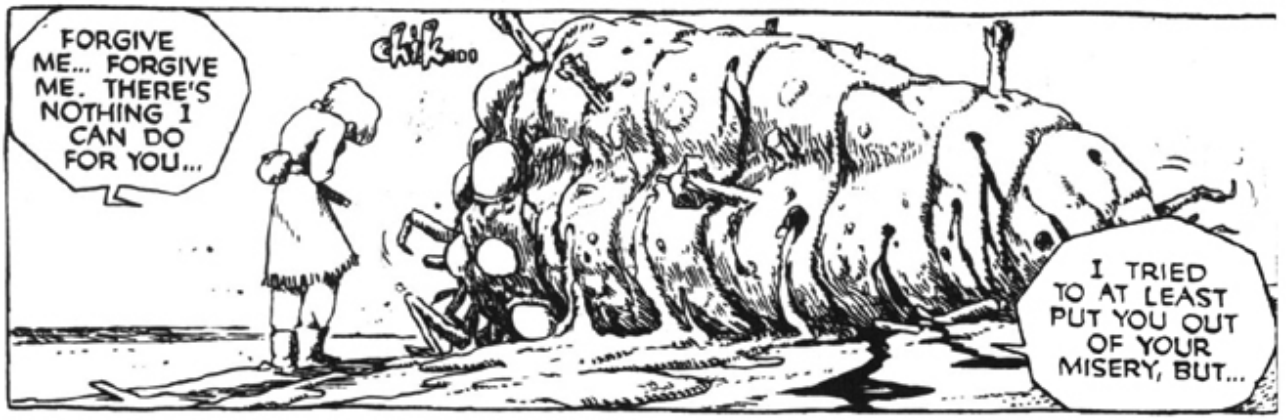


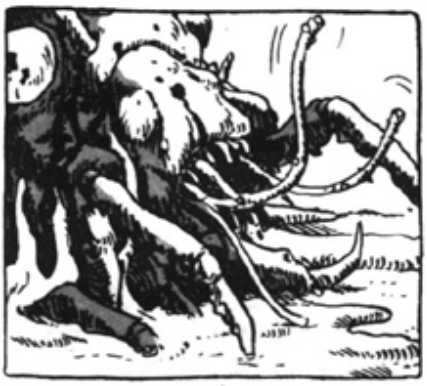

Gkk...

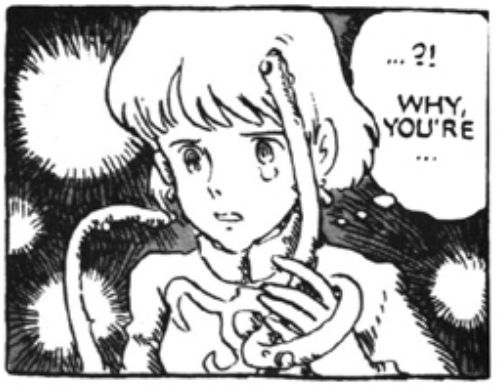
HOW *AWFUL*... THEY LEFT YOU ALIVE ON PURPOSE TO ENRAGE THE OTHER OHMU AND DRAW THEM HERE. YOU COULD SUFFER ON THIS ISLAND ANOTHER MONTH BEFORE YOU FINALLY DIE...


SPSSS
SPKK

BE A GOOD CHILD! PLEASE DON'T MOVE, *PLEASE!* YOU'LL BLEED TO DEATH!
SPSSS


FORGIVE ME... FORGIVE ME. THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU...
CHIK
I TRIED TO AT LEAST PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY, BUT...




...?!
WHY, YOU'RE ...

WHOK

WRAMM

CHOK

BLAM
BOOM
BKOOM
BBLAM
MBRMB

BAM
BAM
BLAM
BLAM

THE ENEMY'S GIVING GROUND. NO AMBUSHES, EITHER. THEY MUST HAVE BEEN A RECON UNIT.

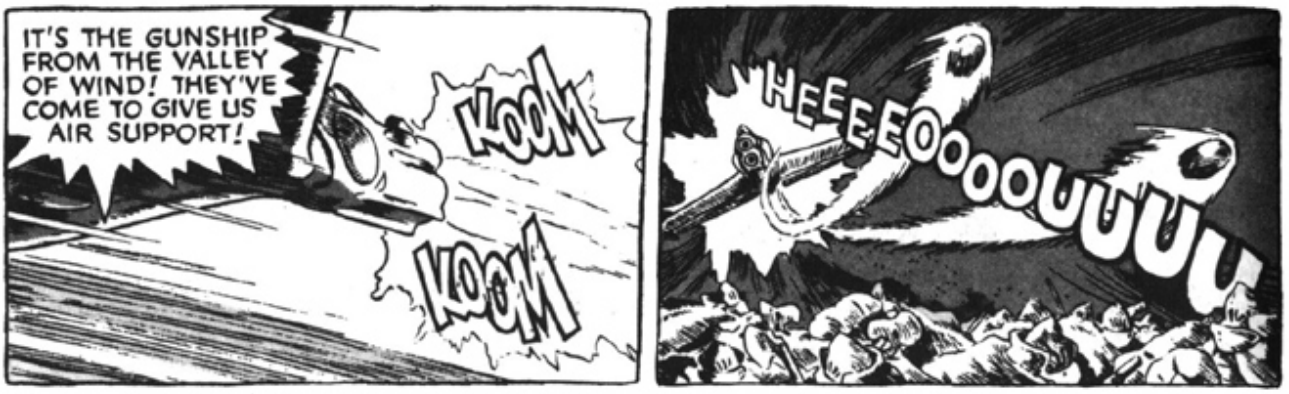
NO...
THEIR LINES ARE TOO SOFT... THEY'RE PLAYING IT CLEVER, BUT IT'S CLEARLY A PLANNED RETREAT.

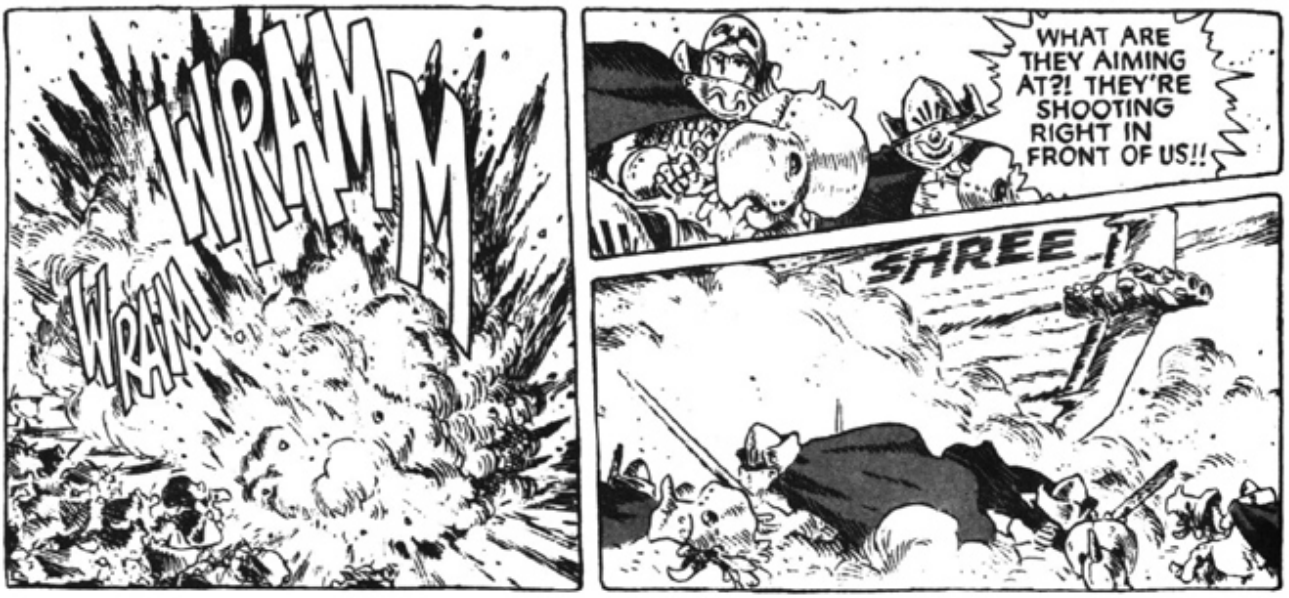
WHAT'S *THAT*? THAT THING SHINING OVER THERE?

IT'S A PORTABLE OHMU-SHELL PILLBOX! WHEN DID THEY...?!

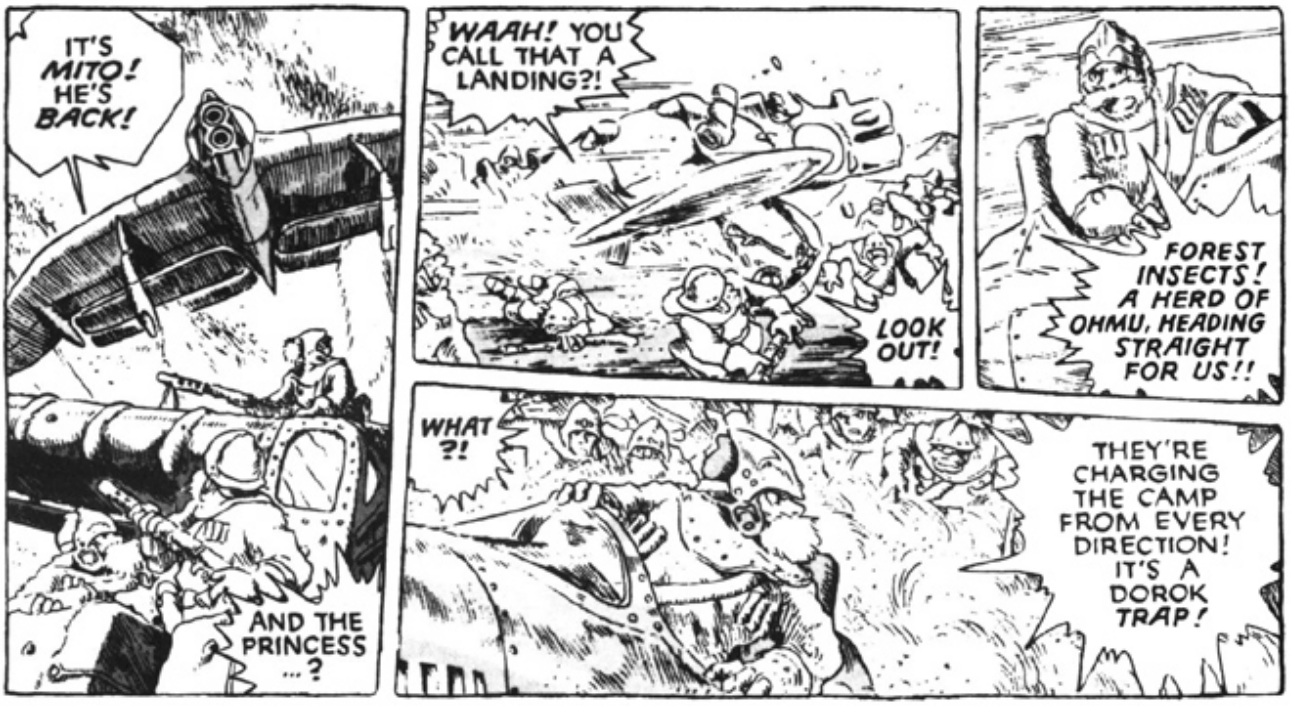
SURELY THEY DON'T MEAN TO HIDE IN *THAT*, DO THEY? HA, HA, HA!
CAUGHT LIKE RATS IN A TRAP!

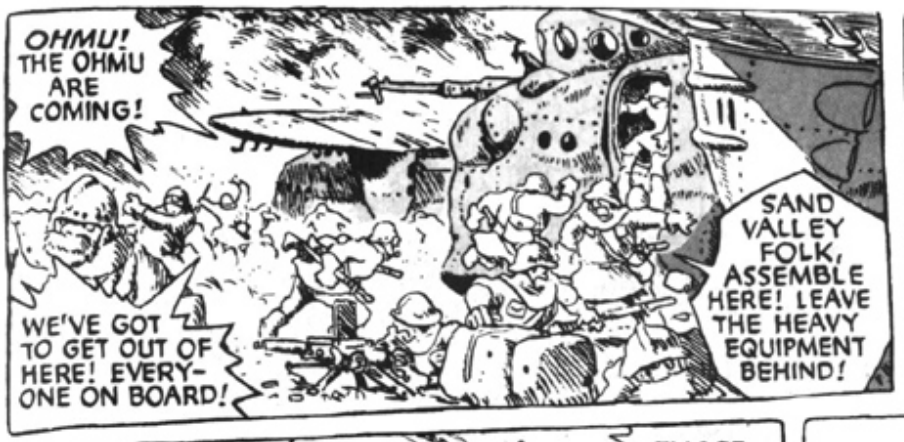
THREE

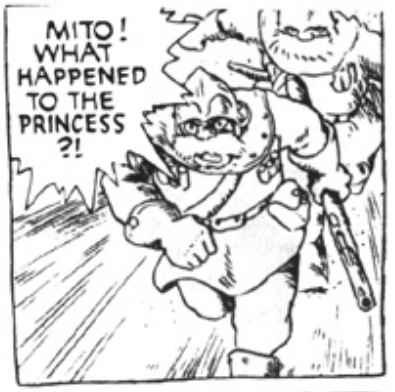

IT'S THE GUNSHIP FROM THE VALLEY OF WIND! THEY'VE COME TO GIVE US AIR SUPPORT!
KOOM
KOOM
HEEEEOOOOUUUU


WRAM
WRAM
WHAT ARE THEY AIMING AT?! THEY'RE SHOOTING RIGHT IN FRONT OF US!!
SHREE !!

THE TIDE'S TURNED! CALL BACK THE TROOPS!
COMMANDER? WHAT...?


IT'S MITO! HE'S BACK!
AND THE PRINCESS ...?
WAAH! YOU CALL THAT A LANDING?!
LOOK OUT!
FOREST INSECTS! A HERD OF OHMU, HEADING STRAIGHT FOR US!!
WHAT ?!
THEY'RE CHARGING THE CAMP FROM EVERY DIRECTION! IT'S A DOROK TRAP!

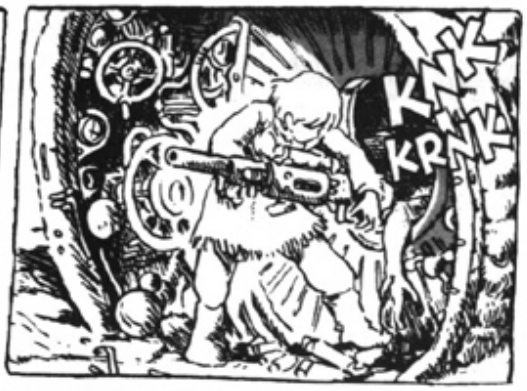

OHMU! THE OHMU ARE COMING!
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! EVERY-ONE ON BOARD!
SAND VALLEY FOLK, ASSEMBLE HERE! LEAVE THE HEAVY EQUIPMENT BEHIND!

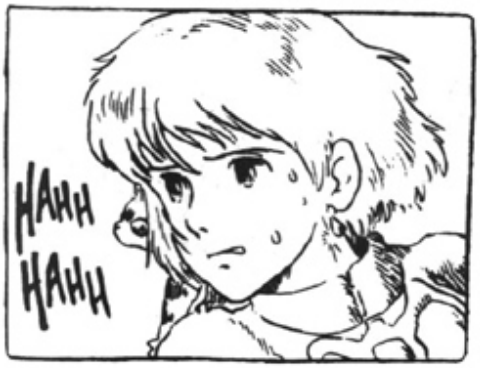

MITO! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PRINCESS ?!

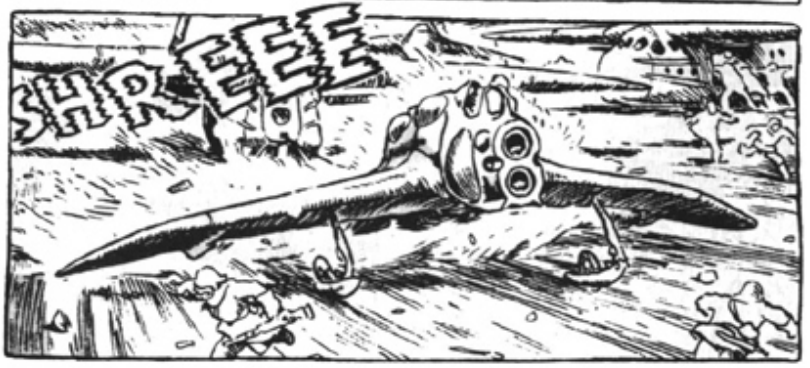
SHE'S IN ACTION AGAINST THE DOROKS!
WHAT?! YOU LEFT HER BEHIND?!
THOSE WERE HER ORDERS!

HAHH HAHH
RMB RMB RMB

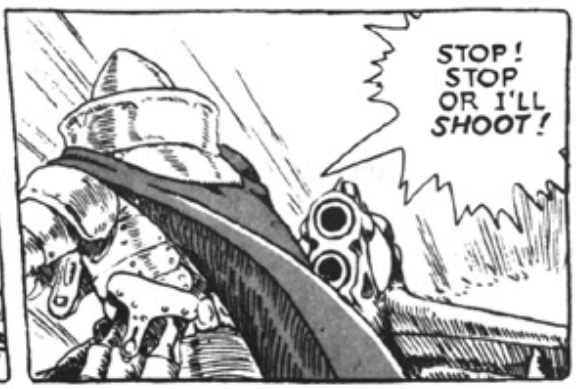
THE PRINCESS IS TOO GENTLE... SO GENTLE SHE MAY DESTROY HERSELF!


KRK KRK


HAHH HAHH


SHRSHEEE

COME BACK! COME BACK! YOU'RE DISOBEYING ORDERS!
KSHOOM


STOP! STOP OR I'LL SHOOT!

BAM
BAM
SPANGG
SPANGG
WHOK
YAAH!
SHREEEE
THEY'RE NOT KIDDING ABOUT THIS!
Uh-uh-oh...! LOOKS LIKE KUSHANA'S INSTINCTS WERE RIGHT ON TARGET!
RMB
RMB
RMB
RMB
RMB
RMB
SHOOM

VRNNNNNNNN
VRNNNNN
VRNNNNNN
COMMANDER! ON THE EASTERN HORIZON!

RMBRMBRMBRMB

RMBRMBRMBRMB
RMBRMBRMB
A HERD OF OHMU! THEY'RE CLOSING IN AT INCREDIBLE SPEED!

MORE COMING IN FROM THE WEST! ANOTHER HUGE HERD!
RMBRMBRMB
THIS MUST BE WHAT THE GUNSHIP WAS WARNING US ABOUT!

FROM BEHIND AS WELL-- OUT OF NO-WHERE!
RMB RMB RMB

THERE'S STILL TIME! SPEED UP THE WITH-DRAWAL!

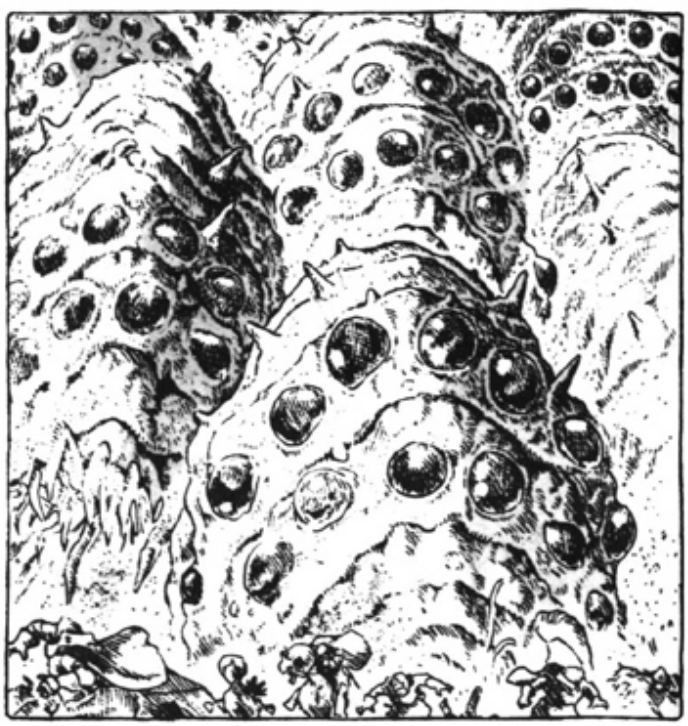
!

RRRMMMBB!
RRRMMMBB
TO THE SHIPS, QUICKLY! DON'T BREAK RANKS!
RRMMBB
LEAVE THE HORSECLAWS! DON'T FORGET THE WOUNDED!
COMMANDER! PLEASE HURRY!
MOVE! GET OUT OF THE WAY!
LET US ON BOARD! OPEN UP!
WE CAN'T! THIS SHIP IS WAITING FOR HER HIGHNESS! THERE'S NO MORE ROOM!
LET US ON OR I'LL RUN YOU THROUGH!
GET HIM! PULL HIM DOWN!
BABAM
BUDDA BUDDA
FORGET IT! TAXI OUT!
KSHOOM

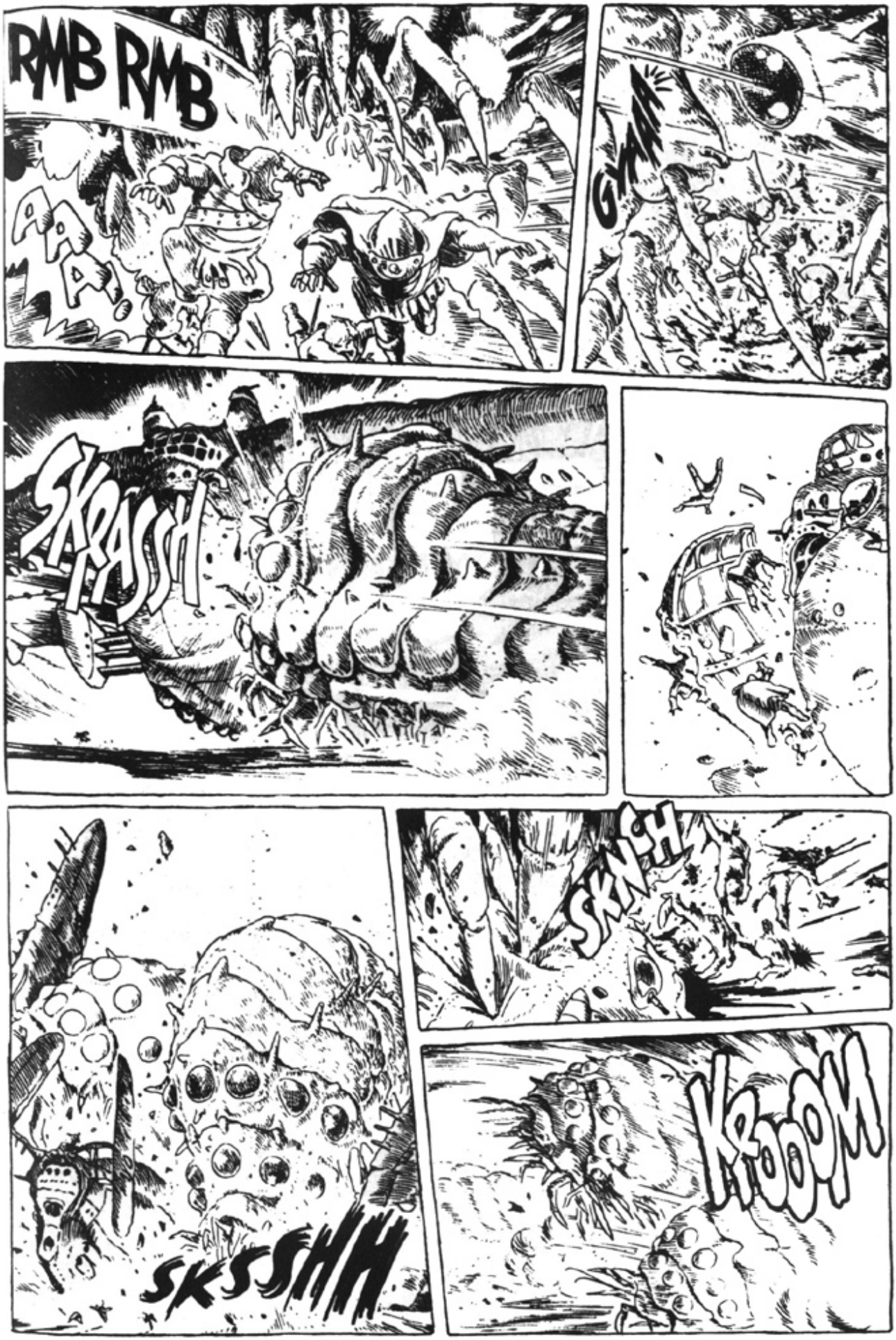
VNNNNNN
OVER THERE! STARBOARD TEN DEGREES!
BAM
YOU CAN'T DIE YET... I STILL NEED YOU!
SPAK
RMB RMB
FLY, DAMN YOU!
VRNN
VRNNNN

VNNNNNN

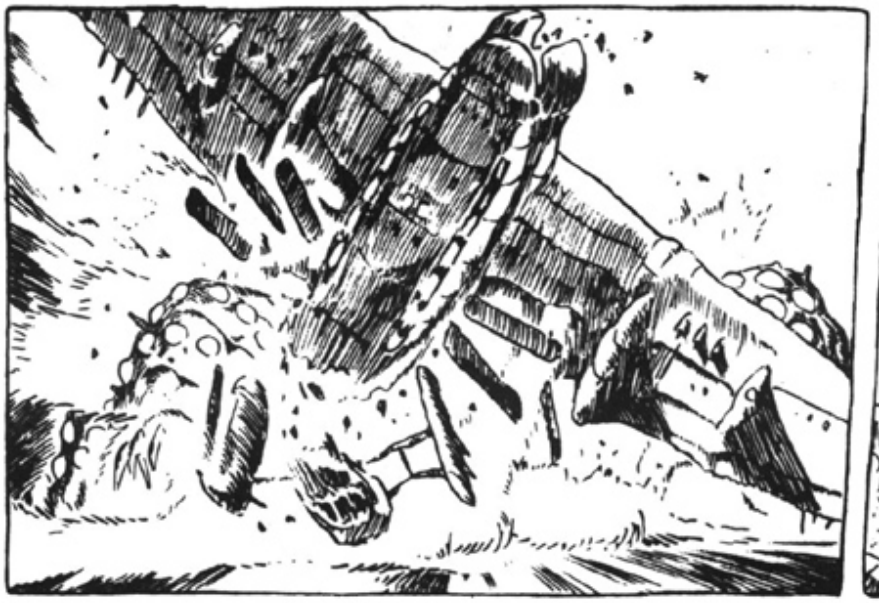
RMB RMB



RMB RMB
RMB RMB


RMB RMB
AAA!
GYAAA
SKRASSH
SKNCH
KROOOM
SKSSHH

VRNNNN
RMB RMB RMB

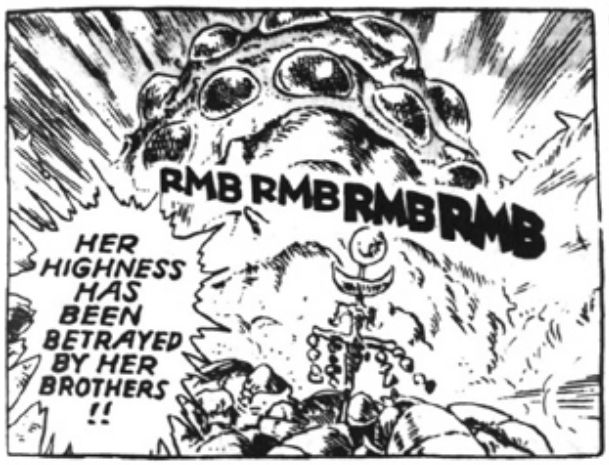


WH BOOM

RMB RMB

RMB
B
DID HER HIGHNESS ESCAPE ?!
I DON'T KNOW! I LOST HER IN THE CHAOS!

DAMN IT! I SAID WE SHOULD RETURN TO THE CAPITAL! THIS WHOLE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN WAS A TRAP!


RMB RMB RMB RMB
HER HIGHNESS HAS BEEN BETRAYED BY HER BROTHERS !!

GYAAAA

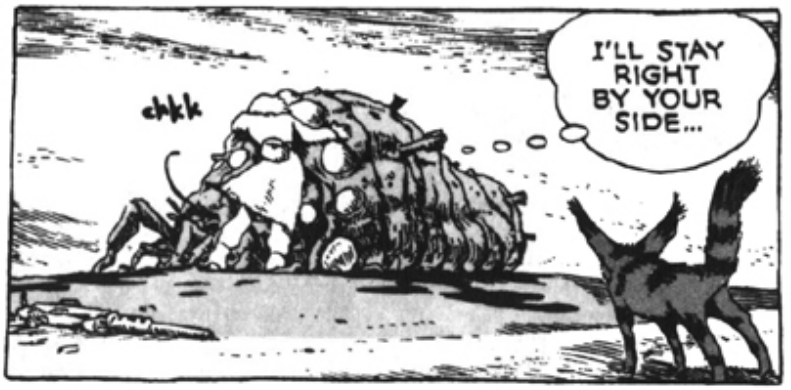
RMB RMB RMB RMB
RMB RMB RMB RMB RMB
RMB RMB RMB

VNNNN
THEY'RE PASSING RIGHT THROUGH THE ENCAMPMENT AND JOINING RANKS... WHERE THE DEVIL ARE THEY GOING?
Aah!
YOU'VE COME TO, HAVE YOU, YOUR HIGHNESS?
HERE... DRINK THIS. I'M SORRY I HAD TO DO THAT, BUT IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE YOU...
WHAK
WHAT HAPPENED TO MY CAVALRY?! DID THEY MAKE IT?!
WE WERE THE ONLY SHIP TO GET AIRBORNE...
THE FLOTILLA'S BEEN ANNIHILATED, COMMANDER.
Heh, heh... NEXT TIME, I WANT YOU IN MY ARMS WITHOUT THE ARMOR...
KUROTOWA!
FOLLOW THE WORMS! IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE FIND OUT HOW THE DOROKS CONTROL THEM!
WHES
AA... YES, YOUR HIGHNESS!

VNNNN
INSIDE, ALL OF YOU! NOW!
SSSSHH
WHP WHP
CHK
I SWEAR YOU WILL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN! ACCEPT THIS, MY PLEDGE OF HONOR!

hahh hahh
RMB RMB
RMB RMB
hahh hahh
hahh hahh
BAM
BAM BAM BAM
BAM
THUD
I CAN'T DO IT!!
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU HURT, YOU'RE STILL ALIVE! YOU STILL WANT TO LIVE!

I'LL STAY WITH YOU...


chkk
I'LL STAY RIGHT BY YOUR SIDE...

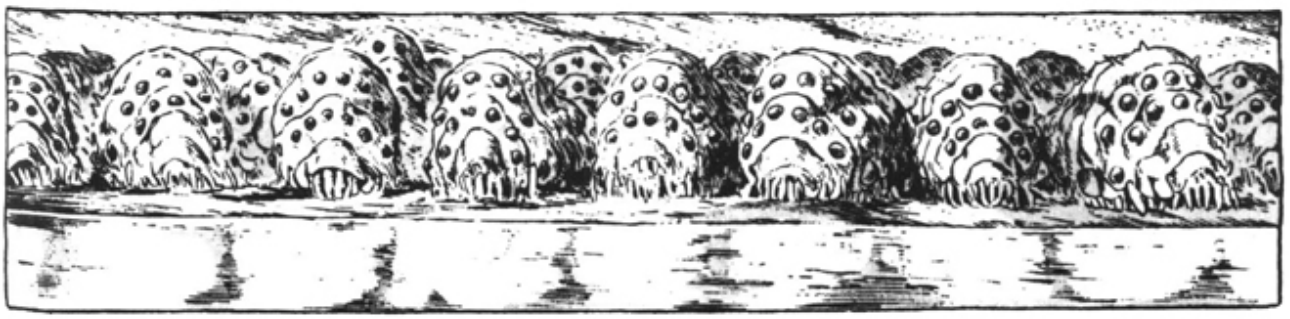
KTHMP
KTHMP

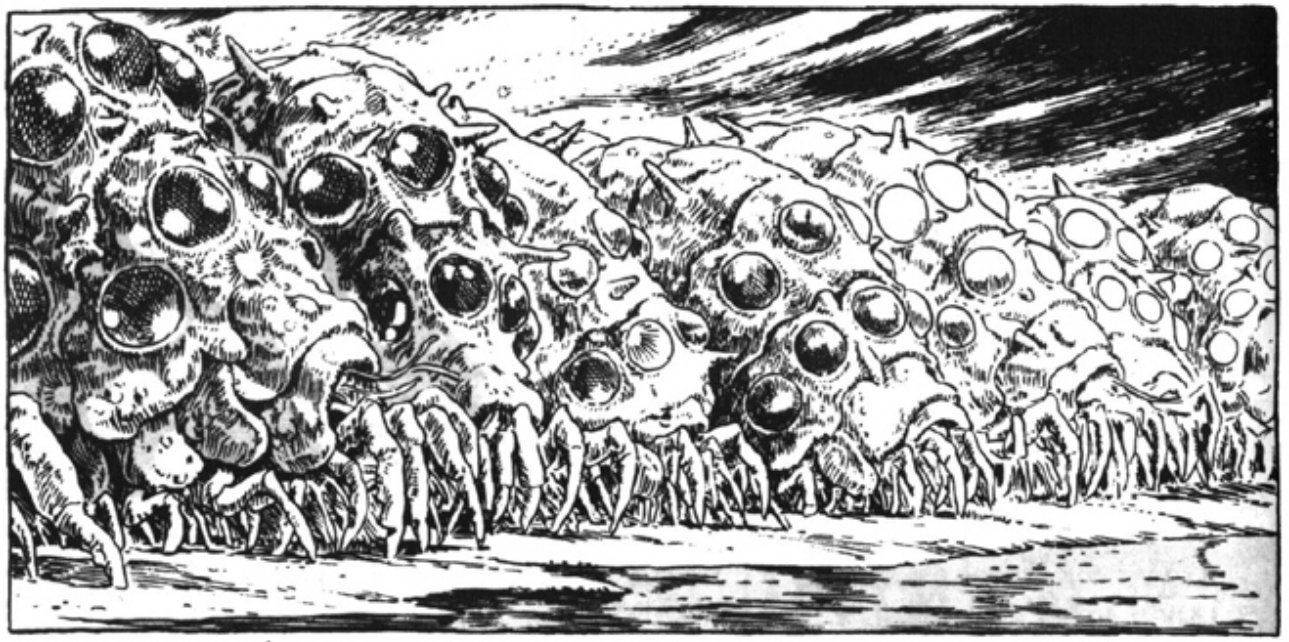
RISE!

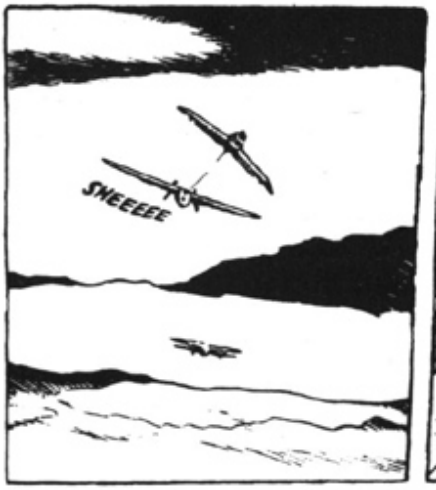
RISE!

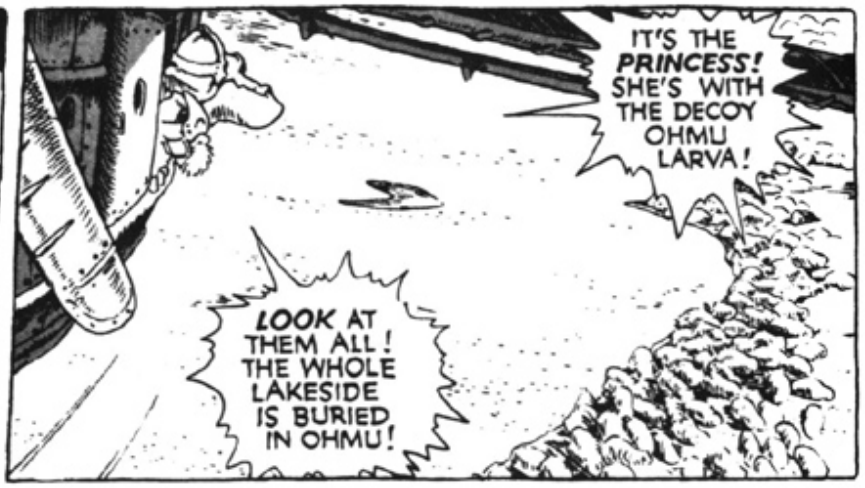
come home with us...
come home... to the Forest...

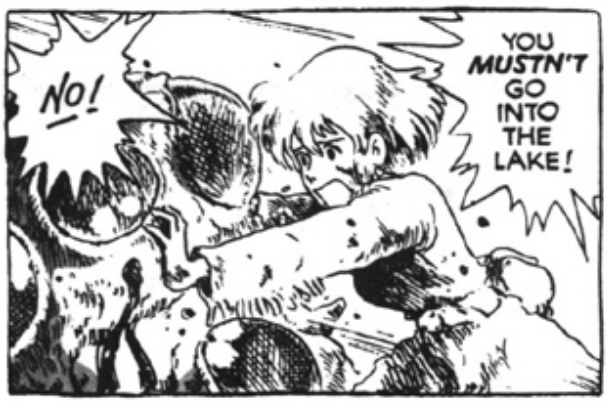
kchk






SHEEEEE


IT'S THE PRINCESS! SHE'S WITH THE DECOY OHMU LARVA!
LOOK AT THEM ALL! THE WHOLE LAKESIDE IS BURIED IN OHMU!


NO!
YOU MUSTN'T GO INTO THE LAKE!

IT'LL DISSOLVE YOUR BODY!

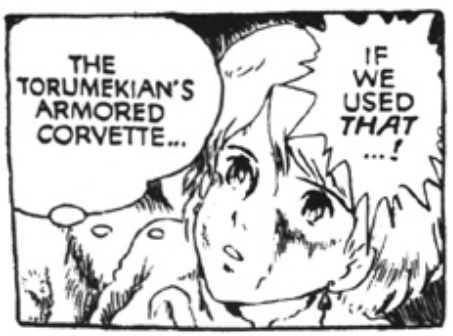
KSSHH
AAA!

SSSS

WHOD

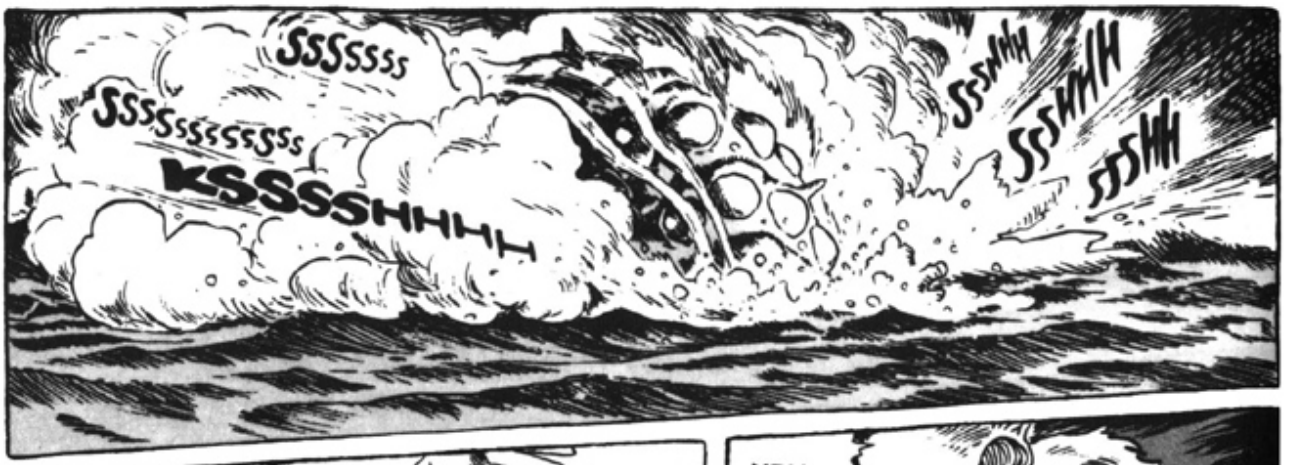
YOU POOR THING... YOU WANT TO JOIN THE OTHERS SO MUCH...

SUCH... SUCH A GENTLE CHILD... I'M ALL RIGHT NOW... YOUR BLOOD... IT WASHED AWAY MY PAIN...
YRWNNNNNN


THE TORUMEKIAN'S ARMORED CORVETTE...
IF WE USED THAT ...!

RMBRMBRMB
SPSHH

KSSHH
KSSHH


SSSSSSS
SSSSSSSSSSS
KSSSSHHHH
SSSHH
SSSHHH
SSSHH

NO!!

YOU MUSTN'T TRY TO COME HERE!

SSSS
...
...

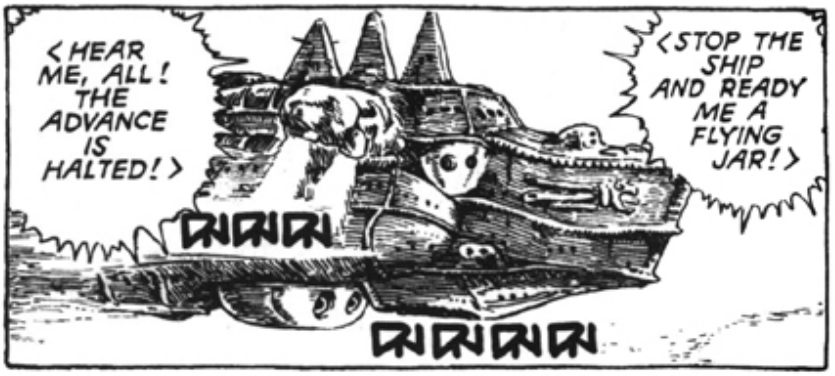
LET US GO HOME...

TO THE FOREST...
THE FOREST...
TO... THE FOREST...

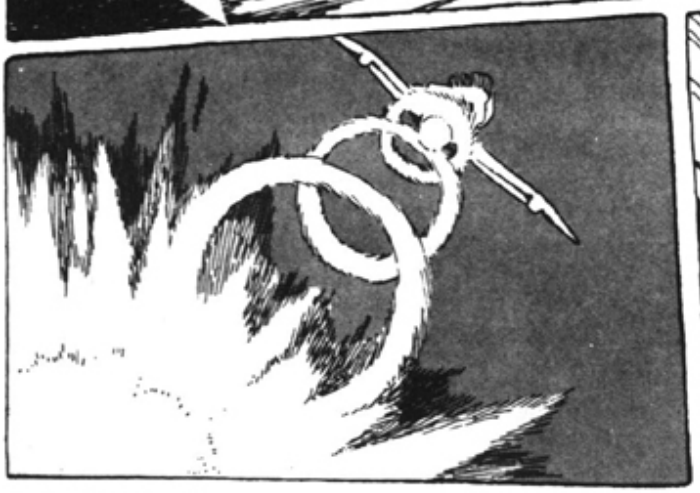
RMB RMB
STOP!!
DON'T GO INTO THE LAKE! JUST TRUST ME!

< HOLY ONE, WHAT'S WRONG ?! >
< WE... WE'LL REACH THE ACID LAKES ANY TIME NOW... >

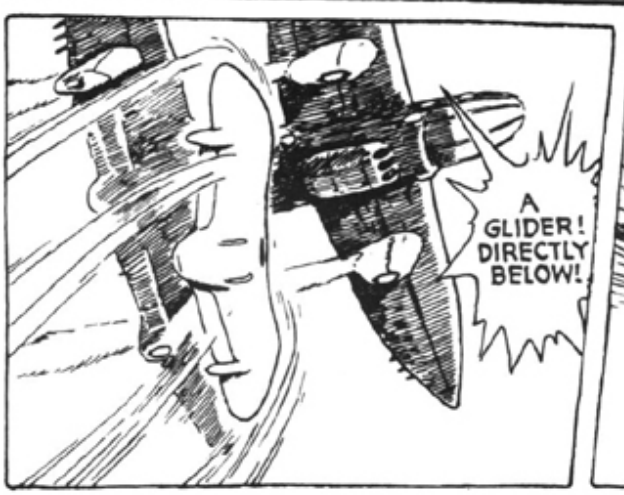
THAT CRY, CUTTING THROUGH MY ENTIRE BODY... THAT POWER... COULD IT BE...?!

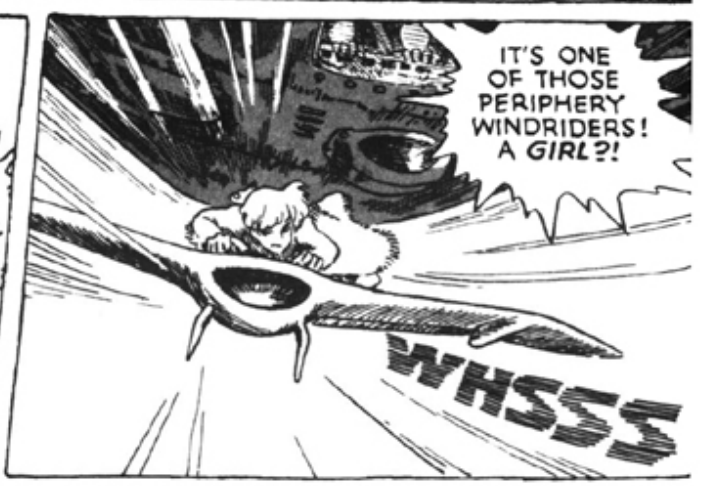

< HEAR ME, ALL! THE ADVANCE IS HALTED! >
< STOP THE SHIP AND READY ME A FLYING JAR! >

VOM



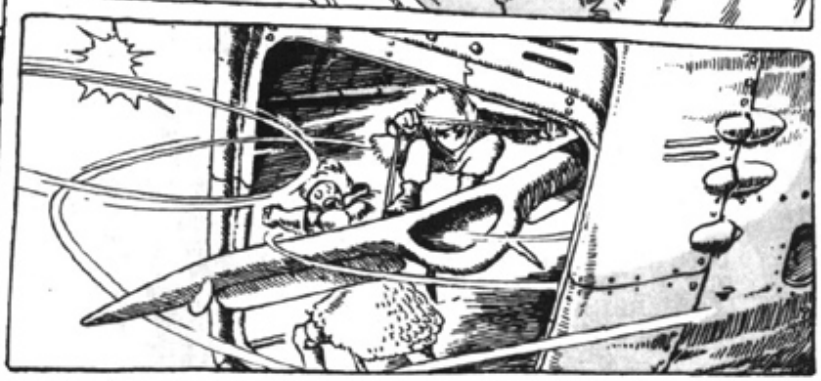
WH
SSS

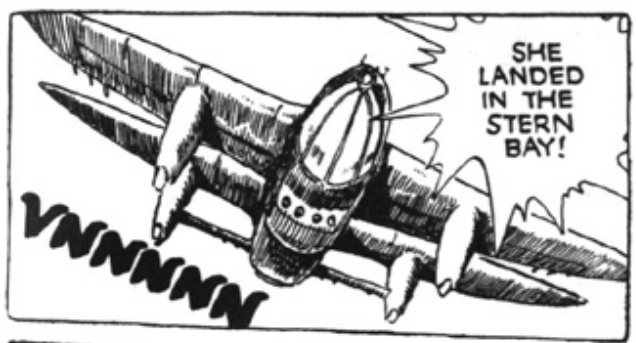

A GLIDER! DIRECTLY BELOW!

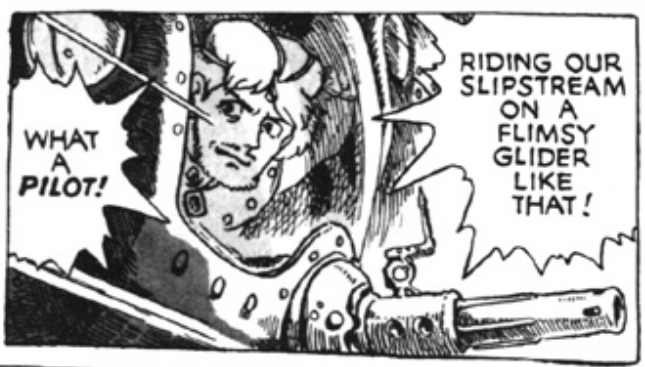

IT'S ONE OF THOSE PERIPHERY WINDRIDERS! A GIRL?!
WHSSS

WHSSS

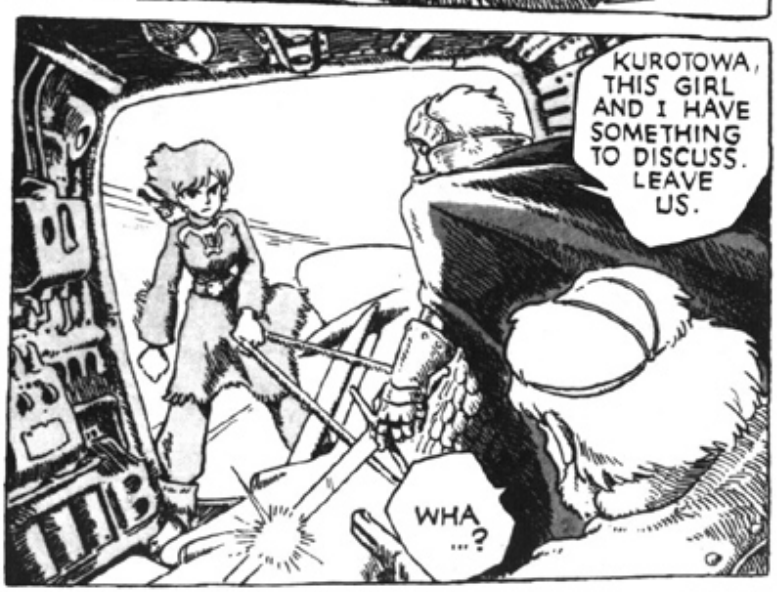
!!




SHE LANDED IN THE STERN BAY!
VNNNNN


WHAT A PILOT!
RIDING OUR SLIPSTREAM ON A FLIMSY GLIDER LIKE THAT!

OUT OF MY WAY! MOVE!


KUROTOWA, THIS GIRL AND I HAVE SOMETHING TO DISCUSS. LEAVE US.
WHA...?

YOUR HIGH-NESS!
...?!

CLOSE THE DOOR... DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS. Uh... YOUR, YOUR HAIR...

KURUTOWA !!
YES, YOUR HIGHNESS!
KANG

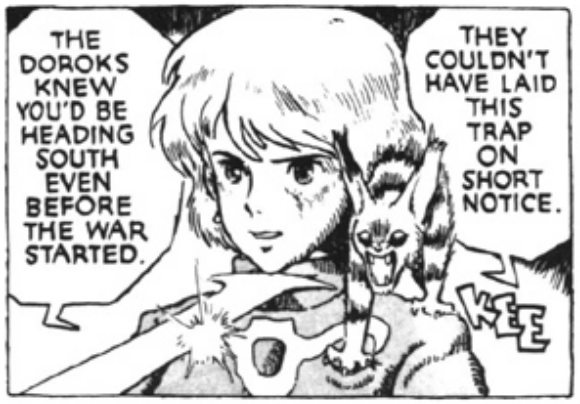
DAMN IT...! HEY! WHERE'S THE STERN BAY VOICE-TUBE?

YOU WANT ME TO USE THIS SHIP TO CARRY AN OHMU LARVA THAT WAS USED AS A DECOY BY THE DOROKS?
I KNOW IT'S TOO LATE TO SAVE HIM, BUT I WANT TO AT LEAST RETURN HIM TO THE FOREST.

ARE YOU INSANE, NAUSICAÄ?!
HA HA

NAUSICAÄ?! NOW I UNDER-STAND... SHE'S THE ONE...

MY LOYAL MEN ALL DIED AN HONORLESS GUTTER DEATH BECAUSE OF THOSE WORMS... LET THE VERMIN DIE IN AGONY!
AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR CLOTHES...? DOROK, AREN'T THEY? I SUPPOSE IT WAS YOU WHO LED THEM TO THE ENCAMP-MENT!


THE DOROKS KNEW YOU'D BE HEADING SOUTH EVEN BEFORE THE WAR STARTED.
THEY COULDN'T HAVE LAID THIS TRAP ON SHORT NOTICE.
KEE

I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING... BUT ONLY ON THE CONDITION THAT YOU TRANSPORT THE OHMU CHILD.
OH, GREAT...

Heh, heh... VERY WELL THEN. BUT I HAVE A CONDITION OF MY OWN...

SWEAR BY YOUR MOTHER'S NAME! WHERE IS THAT STONE?!
AT LAST!

KURUTOWA !!
ACK!

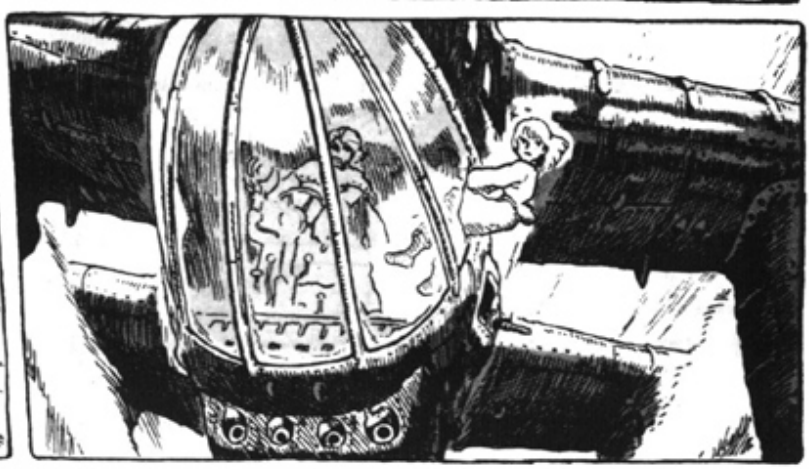
THANK YOU FOR BEING SUCH A DILIGENT MILITARY INSPECTOR. IT'S JUST AS YOU HAVE HEARD.

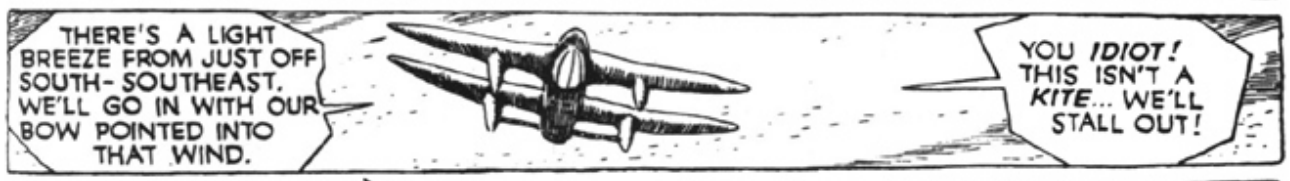
LAND THIS SHIP ON THAT ISLAND. TAKE THE RUDDER YOURSELF, UNDER NAUSICAÄ'S DIRECTION.
WHSSSHH

BAD, VERY BAD. SHE SAW RIGHT THROUGH ME...

IMPOSSIBLE! SURELY YOU DON'T MEAN TO LAND ON THAT LITTLE SANDBAR?!
YOU MUST BE JOKING! I MAY BE GOOD, BUT I'M NOT THAT GOOD!

JUST DO AS I SAY... I'LL READ THE WIND...
ARE YOU CRAZY? HEY!



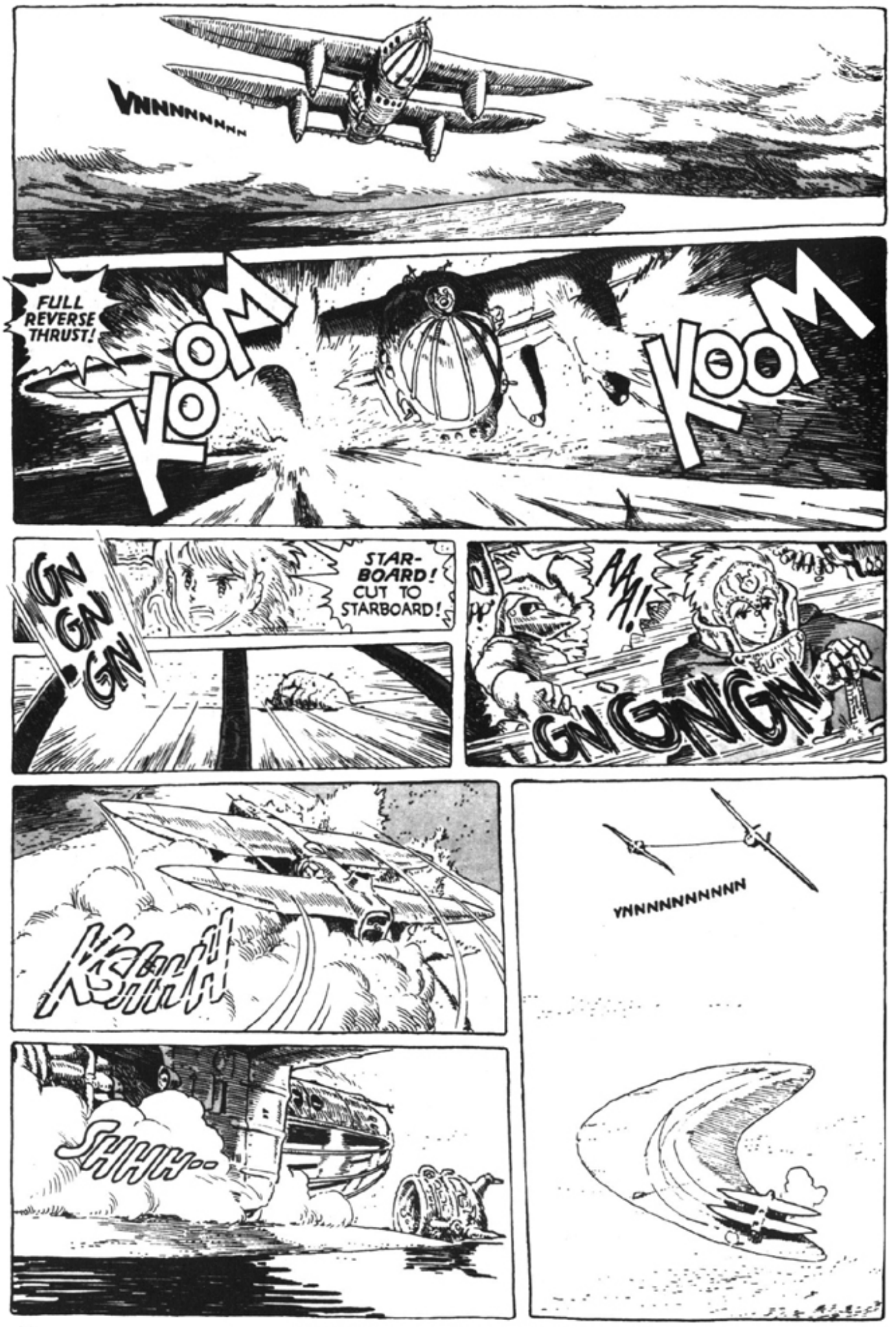

THERE'S A LIGHT BREEZE FROM JUST OFF SOUTH-SOUTHEAST. WE'LL GO IN WITH OUR BOW POINTED INTO THAT WIND.
YOU IDIOT! THIS ISN'T A KITE... WE'LL STALL OUT!

IT'S ALL RIGHT... I CAN SEE A LAYER OF HEAVY AIR JUST ABOVE THE SURFACE OF THE LAKE.
WHA... WHAT WAS THAT...?

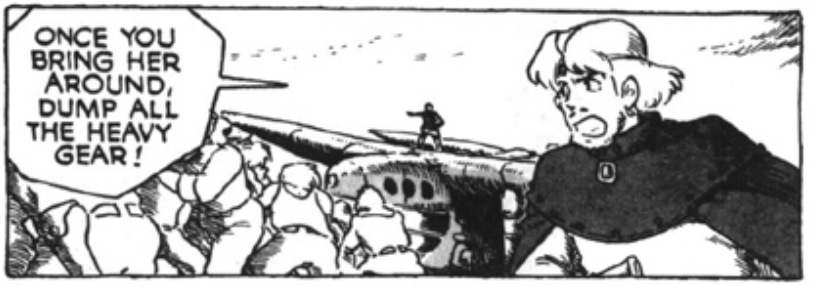
VNNNNNN
TAKE HER DOWN! STEADY!
AAA!

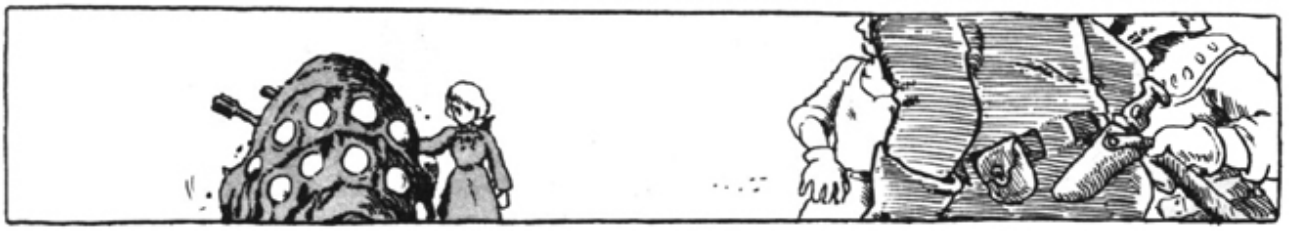
STEADY ON THE RUDDER!

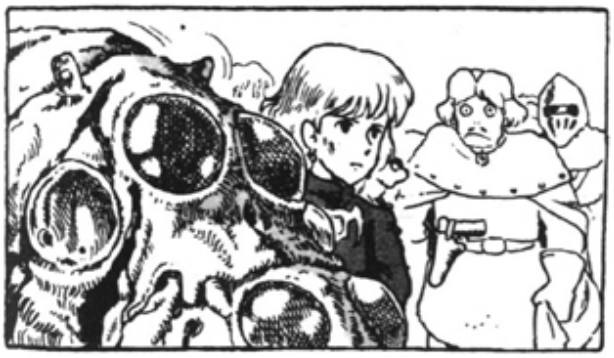
....
...!!

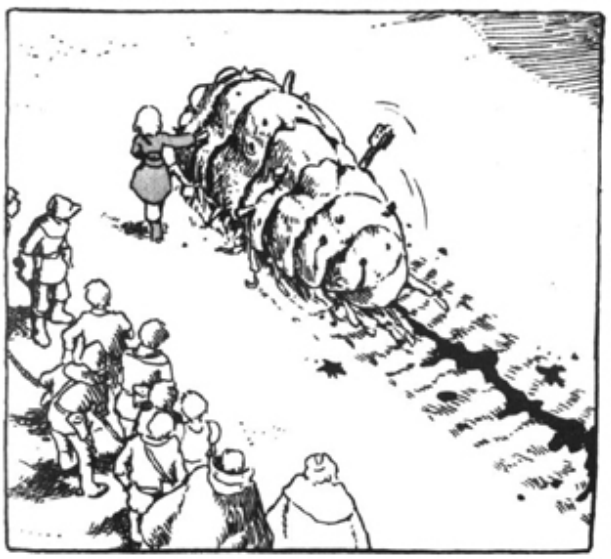

VNNNNNNNNN
FULL REVERSE THRUST!
KOOM
KOOM
GN GN GN
STAR-BOARD! CUT TO STARBOARD!
AAA!
GNGNGN
KSHHH
SHHH--
YNNNNNNNNNN

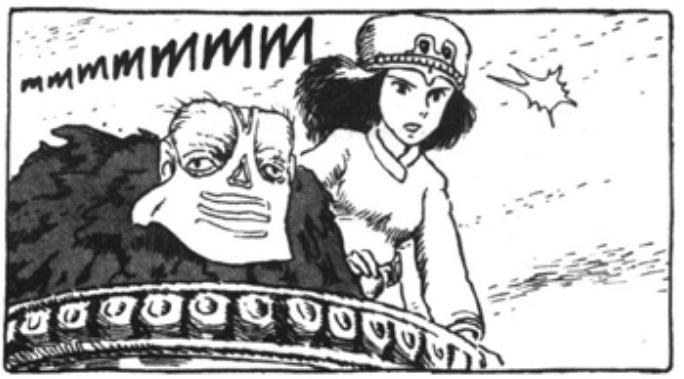
PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT! CAN'T YOU PULL HARDER ?!


ONCE YOU BRING HER AROUND, DUMP ALL THE HEAVY GEAR!



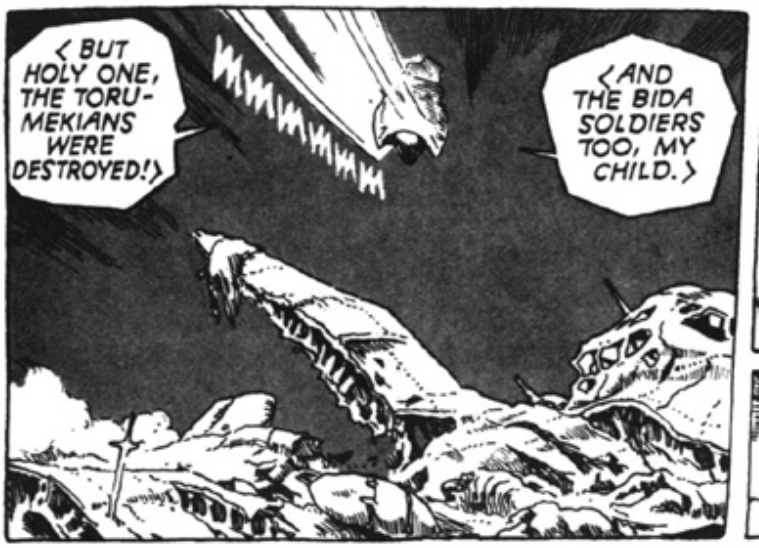


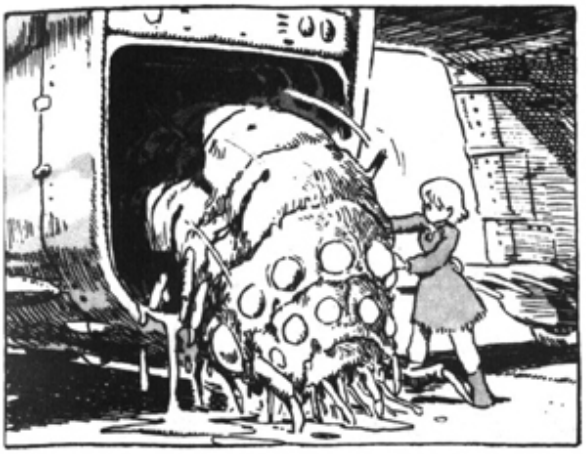


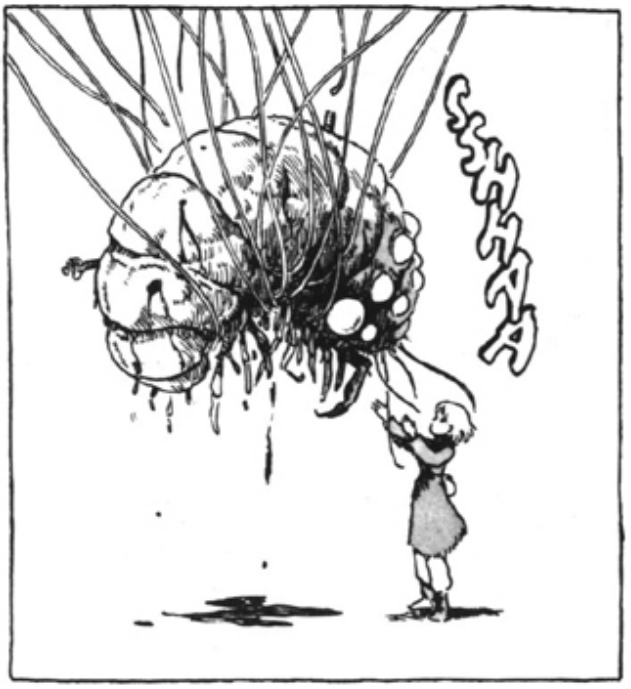


.....!
<HOLY ONE! THE BIDA TRIBE PILLBOX HAS BEEN SMASHED-- THE OHMU HAVE KILLED THEM ALL!>

<SUCH A SHAME... WHAT A TERRIBLE DEATH. THE HOLY EMPEROR AND THE BIDA FOLK UNDER-ESTIMATED THE OHMU.>
<I WARNED THEM THAT THE OHMU ARE SACRED CREATURES, AND ARE NOT TO BE TOUCHED ...>

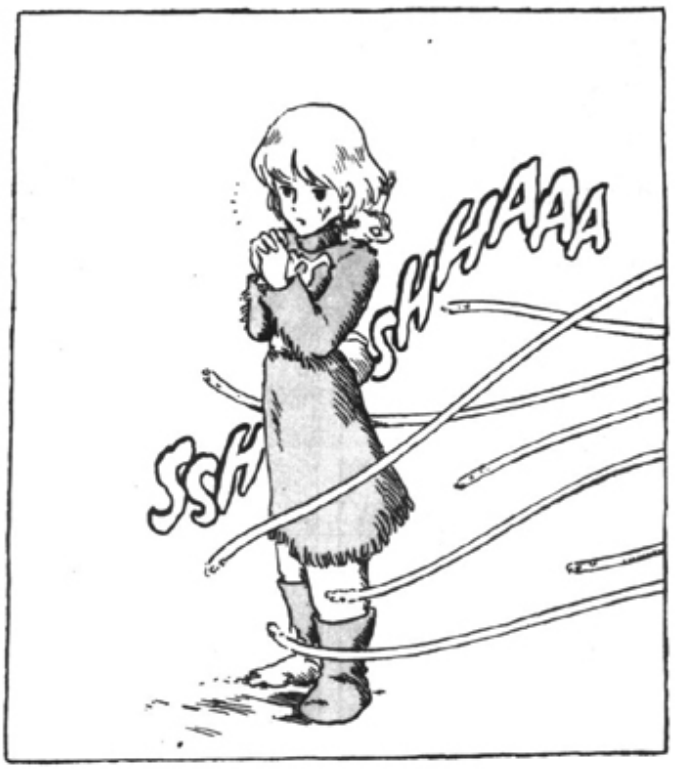

<BUT HOLY ONE, THE TORU-MEKIANS WERE DESTROYED!>
<AND THE BIDA SOLDIERS TOO, MY CHILD.>




SHHHAAA

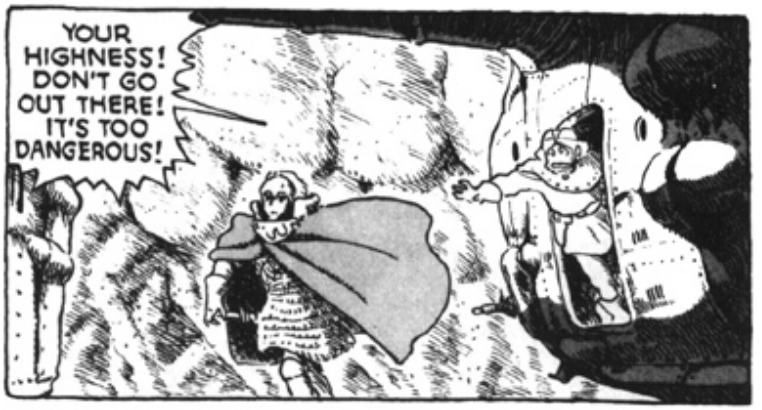
SHHHAAAA

FAREWELL...
.....


SSH
SHHHAAA

WHAT A MAGNIFICENT OHMU... LIKE A FOREST ITSELF...
SHHHHAA
SHHHHAA

.....
.....!!


YOUR HIGHNESS! DON'T GO OUT THERE! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!

THESE AREN'T SPORES... WHAT THE? PARTICLES OF LIGHT...?

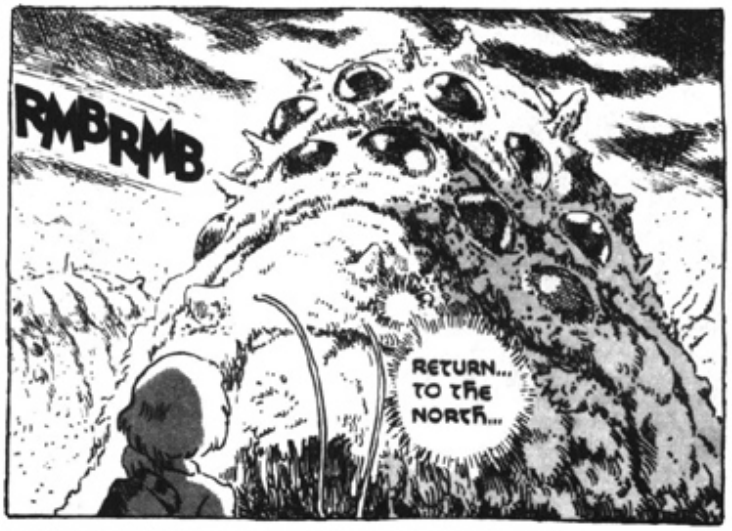
THE PAIN FROM MY BURN IS FLOWING AWAY LIKE WATER...

THANK YOU! THANK YOU, ALL OF YOU...

THANK YOU...
Oh, THANK YOU...

TENDERNESS AND LOVING FRIENDSHIP FLOOD MY BREAST...
THE OHMU HAVE OPENED THEIR HEARTS...
<KETCHA, MY CHILD! WHAT DOES SHE LOOK LIKE, AMONG THE OHMU?
TAKE THE PLACE OF MY BLIND EYES, AND SEE...>
<THEY'RE SO FAR AWAY I CAN BARELY TELL... BUT SHE'S WEARING A BLUE DRESS... IT'S THAT DRESS, THE ONE THE OLD WOMAN GAVE HER.>
BUT THE COLOR'S WRONG...
<"IT'S PUREST BLUE, AS IF DYED IN OHMU BLOOD.">
<"THEIR FEELERS LOOK LIKE GOLDEN GRASS, SWAYING IN THE WIND...">
<SHE COULD ALMOST BE WALKING ACROSS A FIELD OF GOLD...>
<"And that one shall come to you garbed in raiment of blue, descending upon a field of gold...">
RMB RMB
RMBMRB

RMBRMBRMBRMB


RMBRMB
RETURN... TO THE NORTH...

SO YOU TWO ARE TRAVELING TO THE FOREST IN THE SOUTH...
BUT WHY IS THE FOREST ASKING FOR HELP?

.....

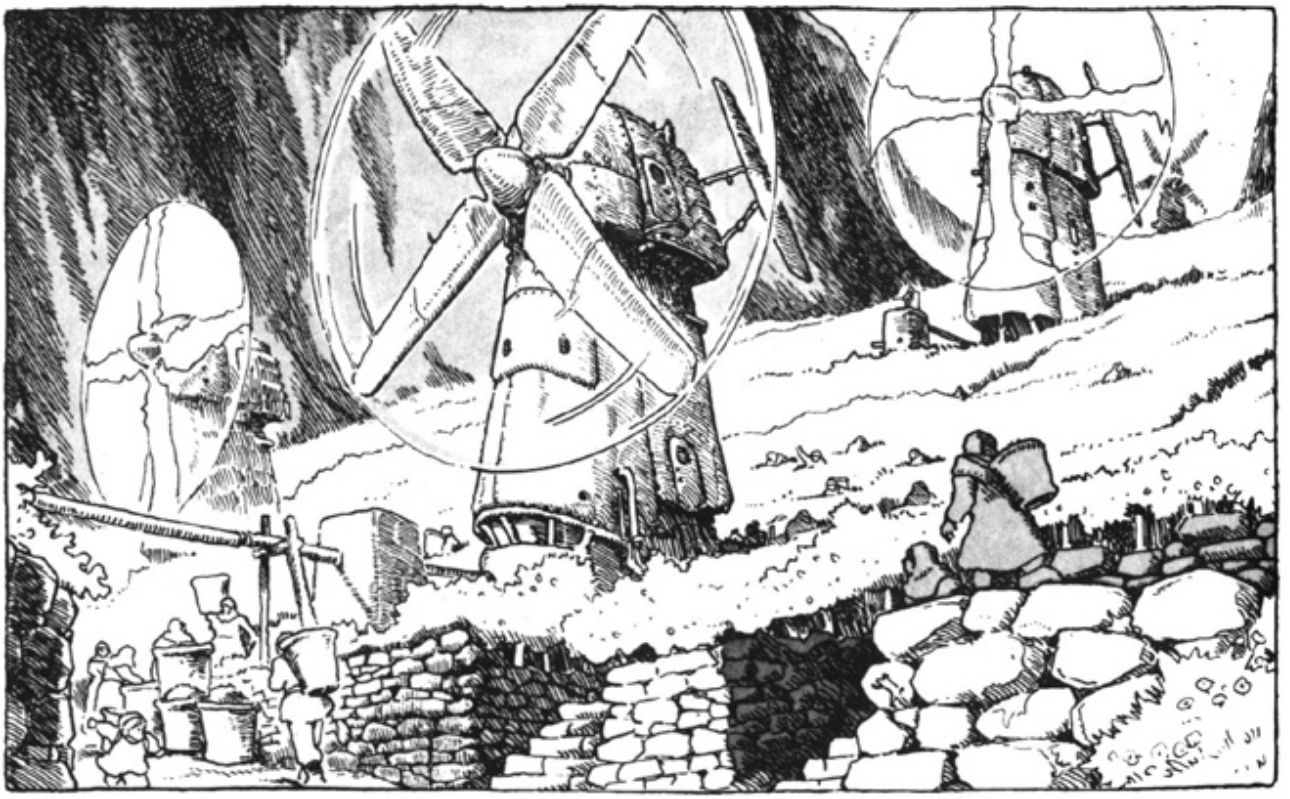
SOME-THING'S WRONG... THEY'VE CLOSED THEIR MINDS TO ME...

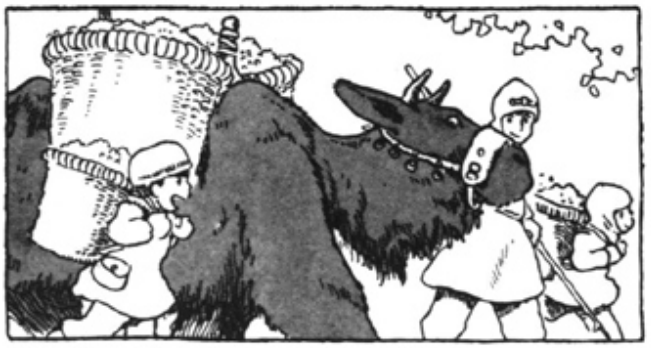
TELL ME! THE DOROK LANDS ARE IN THE SOUTH-- IS SOMETHING HAPPENING THERE?

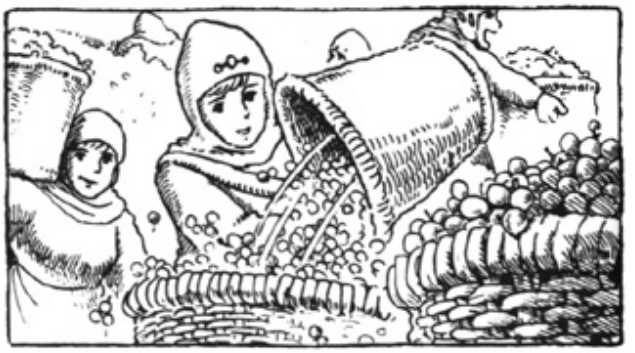
RETURN... TO THE NORTH...

RMBRMBRMB
RMBRMBRMB

.....
.....

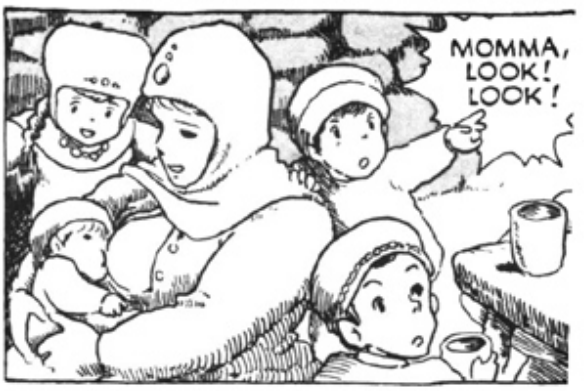




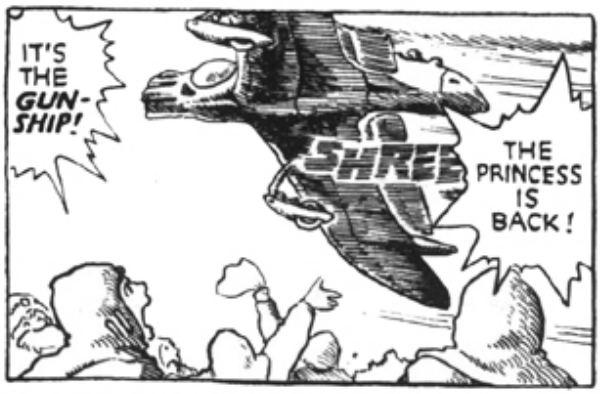


HEAR YE, HEAR YE! REST NOW FROM YOUR LABORS!
KONGG KONGG

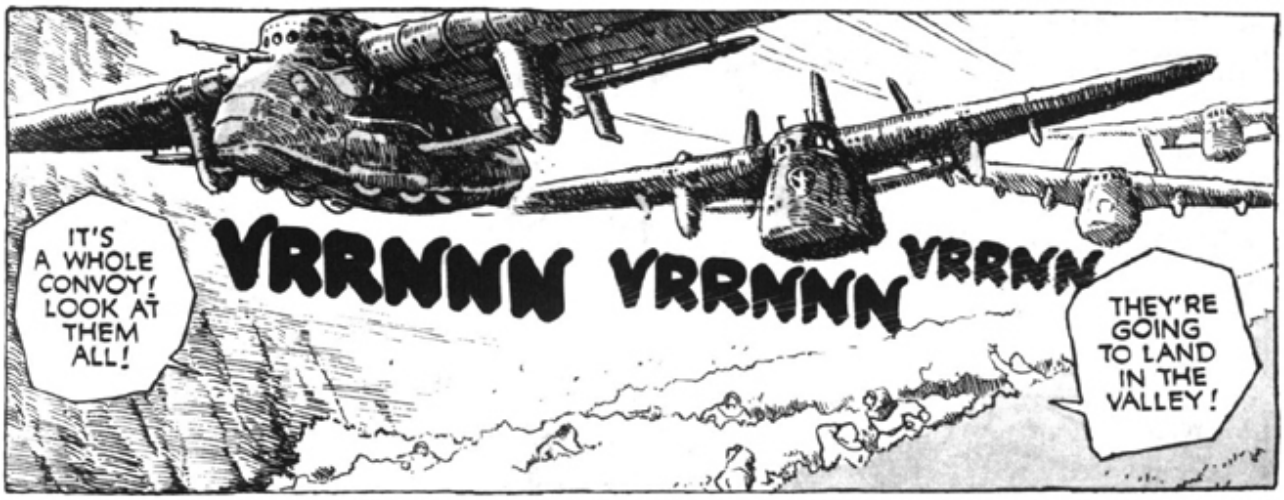
HOW ARE THEY? NOT BAD, I'LL WAGER.
Mmm. SWEET AND JUICY... THE WIND BLEW FAIR THIS YEAR.


MOMMA, LOOK! LOOK!

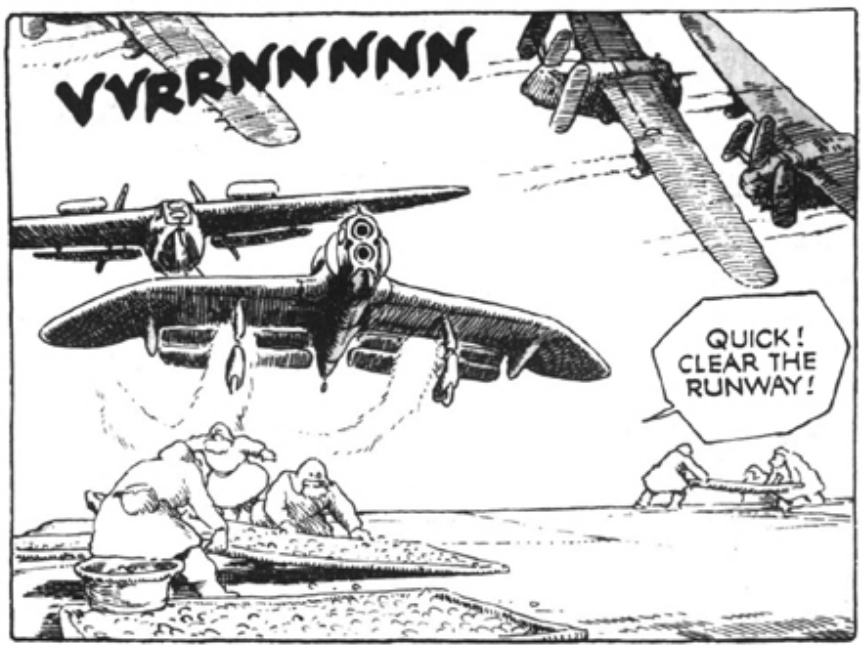
VRNNNNNNN

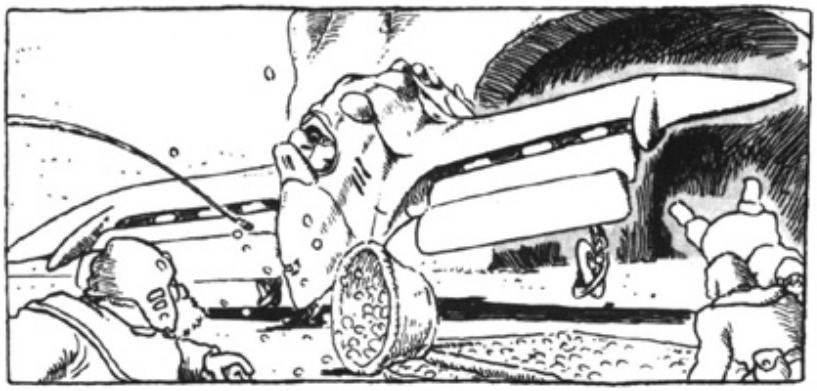

IT'S THE GUN-SHIP!
SHREE
THE PRINCESS IS BACK!

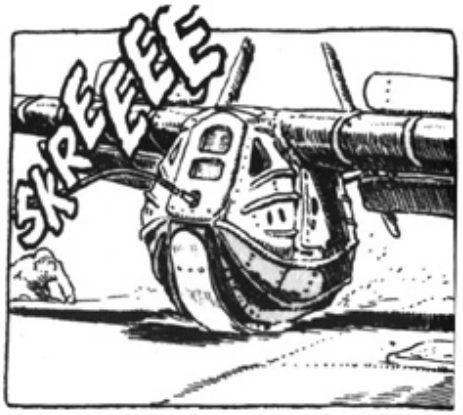
VVRRRNNNN

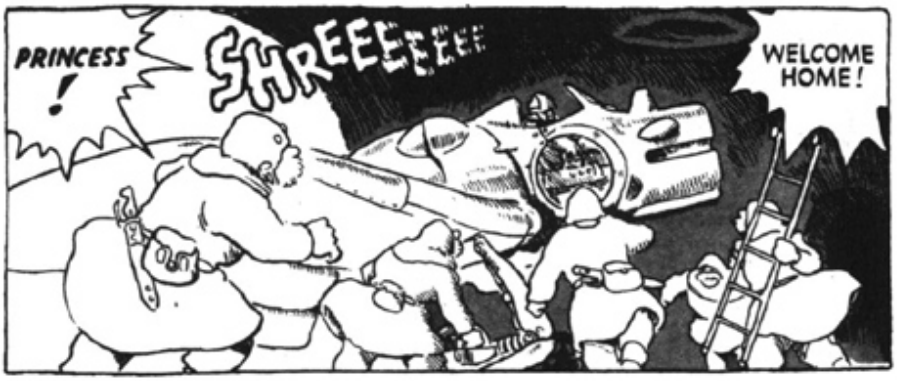

IT'S A WHOLE CONVOY! LOOK AT THEM ALL!
VRRNNN VRRNNN VRRNN
THEY'RE GOING TO LAND IN THE VALLEY!

HURRY! SOMETHING'S GOING ON!
NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE!


VVRRNNNNN
QUICK! CLEAR THE RUNWAY!




SKREEEE


PRINCESS!
SKREEEEEEE
WELCOME HOME!

!

MITO! WHERE'S THE PRINCESS?!
IS SHE IN THE BARGE?!

THE PRINCESS ISN'T HERE-- SHE STAYED AT THE FRONT.
WHAT?! YOU WENT AND LEFT HER BEHIND?! WHY?!

YOU CALL YOURSELF A RETAINER?!
THE PRINCESS! IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
EXPLAIN YOURSELF! RIGHT NOW!
CONFOUND IT, BE QUIET!

EVEN NOW, THE PRINCESS IS ADVANCING SOUTH ACROSS THE ROTWOOD WITH THE REMNANTS OF THE TORU-MEKIAN ARMY.

WHAT...?!

I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING WHEN I MEET WITH KING JHIL, BUT IT'S ONE REASON ALL THE CHIEFTAINS OF THE PERIPHERY HAVE COME HERE. I TOLD THEM TO LAND BY THE COAST. SEND OUT A GREETING PARTY.

THEY'VE GOT WOUNDED ABOARD, AND EVERYONE'S STARVING.
DO YOU HEAR ME?! GET MOVING! NOW!!

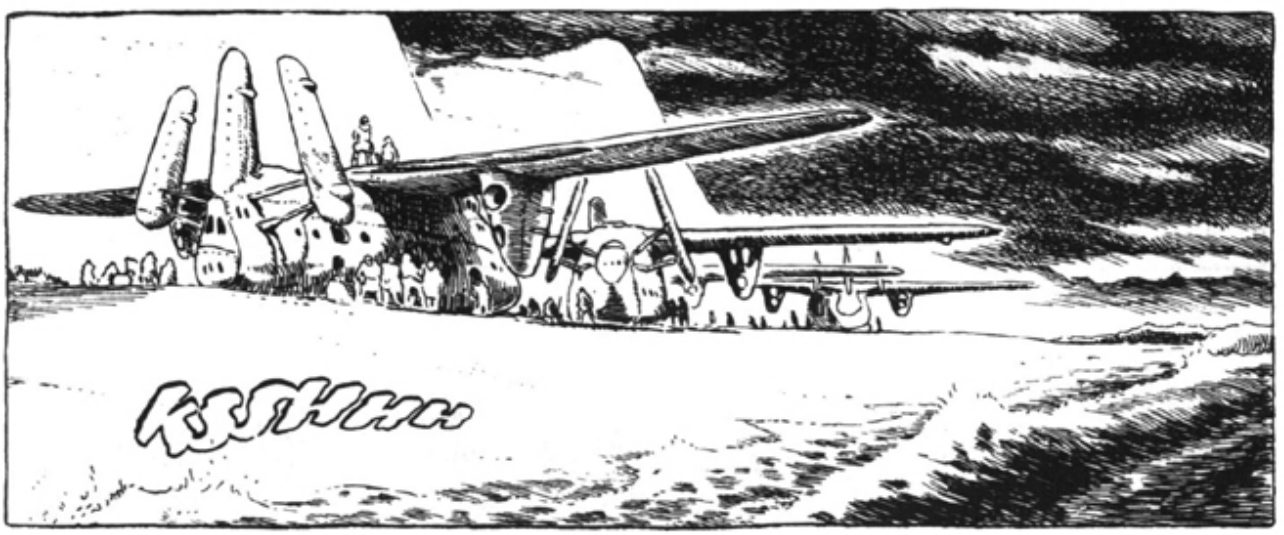
MITO... A WORD WITH YOU...

VNNNN
KING JHIL...

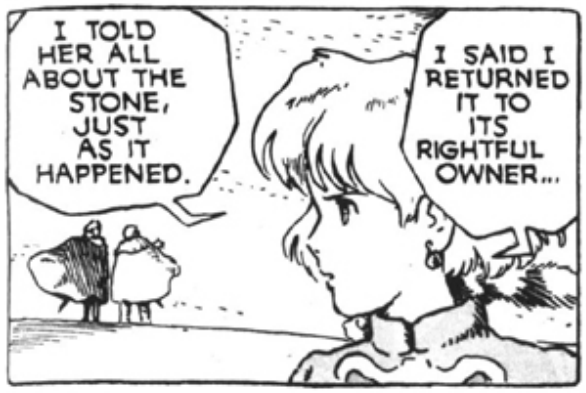
SO... KING JHIL HAS LOST THE LIGHT... THE END MUST BE VERY NEAR...

FORTUNATELY HIS MIND AND SPEECH ARE STILL CLEAR...

I'LL GO SEE HIM AND GIVE MY REPORT.
WHEN THE CHIEFTAINS ARRIVE, PLEASE BRING THEM UP TO HIS ROOM.

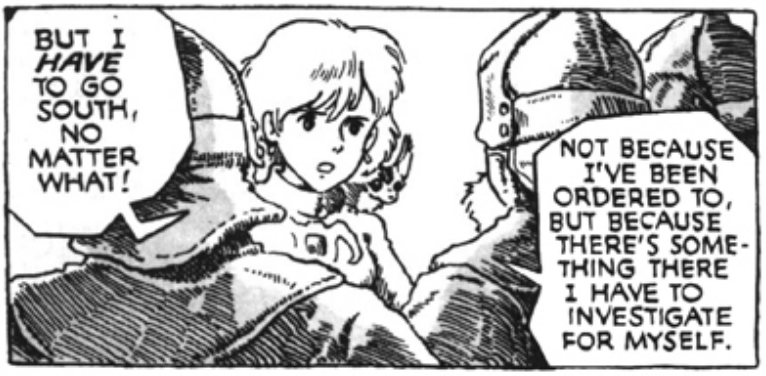

KSHHHH

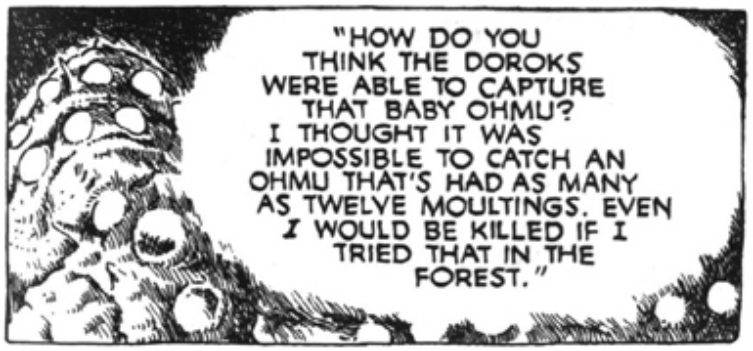
...OF WHAT PRINCESS NAUSICAÄ AND PRINCESS KUSHANA SPOKE THEREAFTER, I KNOW NOT.
"THE TWO OF THEM TALKED LONG TOGETHER, ALONE..."
KURO-TOWA!
!
MAD-NESS!
HAVING YOU CONTINUE THE MISSION ALONE, PRINCESS?! WHAT'S THE POINT OF THAT?!
THE OTHER CHIEFTAINS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THEIR OWN COUNTRIES--THE WHOLE SOUTHERN OPERATION'S BEEN SCRUBBED!
WHY, YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE A HOSTAGE!
YES! THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT? IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT DAMNED "STONE" THING...
I VOLUNTEERED TO GO, UNCLE MITO.


I TOLD HER ALL ABOUT THE STONE, JUST AS IT HAPPENED.
I SAID I RETURNED IT TO ITS RIGHTFUL OWNER...

... AND THAT HE STAYED ON THE DOROK SHIP SO I COULD ESCAPE.
HE MAY ALREADY BE DEAD...

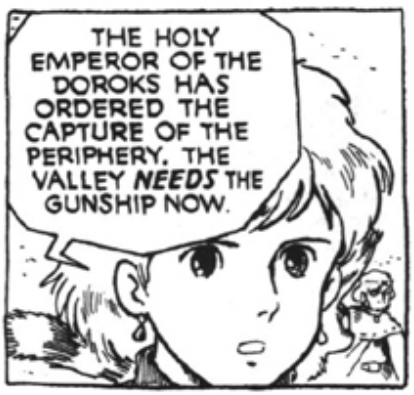
IF I COULD, I'D GO SEARCH FOR THAT SHIP RIGHT NOW... I'D FIND OUT IF HE'S SAFE...

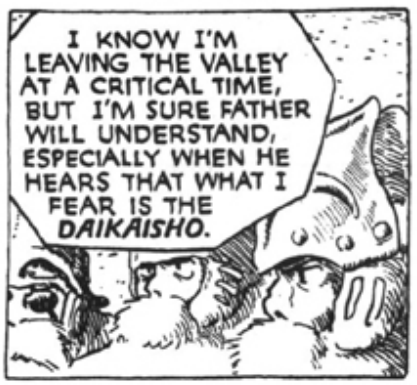

BUT I *HAVE* TO GO SOUTH, NO MATTER WHAT!
NOT BECAUSE I'VE BEEN ORDERED TO, BUT BECAUSE THERE'S SOMETHING THERE I HAVE TO INVESTIGATE FOR MYSELF.


"HOW DO YOU THINK THE DOROKS WERE ABLE TO CAPTURE THAT BABY OHMU? I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO CATCH AN OHMU THAT'S HAD AS MANY AS TWELVE MOULTINGS. EVEN *I* WOULD BE KILLED IF I TRIED THAT IN THE FOREST."

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT COULD BE... BUT SOMETHING TERRIBLE, SOMETHING *UNIMAGINABLE* IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN IN THE SOUTH. THIS WAS BUT THE FIRST SIGN.

THE OHMU SENSE WHAT'S COMING. THEY FEARED THEIR OWN FORETASTE OF SLAUGHTER, AND CLOSED THEIR MINDS TO ME WHEN I ASKED. AS IF THEY THOUGHT THINGS COULD ONLY GET WORSE, FAR WORSE...
I WANT YOU TO RETURN TO THE VALLEY AND TELL THIS TO FATHER AND MASTER YUPA. ALL THE OHMU OF THE FOREST ARE ON THE MOVE, AND I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHY.
THEN, PRINCESS, TAKE THE *GUNSHIP* AT THE VERY LEAST!!


THE HOLY EMPEROR OF THE DOROKS HAS ORDERED THE CAPTURE OF THE PERIPHERY. THE VALLEY *NEEDS* THE GUNSHIP NOW.


I KNOW I'M LEAVING THE VALLEY AT A CRITICAL TIME, BUT I'M SURE FATHER WILL UNDERSTAND, ESPECIALLY WHEN HE HEARS THAT WHAT I FEAR IS THE *DAIKAISHO*.

I SEE... SHE SPOKE OF THE DAIKAISHO...
YES, MY LIEGE. SHE SAID TO TELL YOU THUS.
THE "DAI... KAI... SHO...?"
WHAT...?
Ahh, NOW THEN... IT SEEMS YOUNG FOLK NOWADAYS DON'T KNOW A THING!
THIS IS SOMETHING EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW... SEND SOMEONE TO FETCH THE MATRIARCH.
SHE'S MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD... THE OLDEST PERSON IN THE PERIPHERY.
I'VE HEARD RUMORS, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS STILL ALIVE...
OHO, HO... LITTLE NAUSICAÄ, eh? WHY, I CAN'T IMAGINE HER AS OTHER THAN A BABE...
"ACCORDING TO THE CHRONICLES, THE DAIKAISHO IS A TIME WHEN THE FOREST SUDDENLY BOILS OVER AND RISES LIKE A TIDAL WAVE TO COVER THE LAND. IT IS WRITTEN THAT THERE HAVE BEEN THREE SUCH WAVES SINCE THE SEVEN DAYS OF FIRE."
"IN THE TONGUE OF THE ANCIENTS, DAIKAISHO MEANS 'THE GREAT WAVE OF THE SEA.' THE LAST WAS 300 YEARS AGO. IN THOSE DAYS, THE TRIBES OF THE PERIPHERY WERE BOUND TOGETHER IN THE KINGDOM OF EFTAL... THE FOREST LAY FAR DISTANT IN THE HEART OF THE CONTINENT, AND OASES GLITTERED IN THE DESERT LIKE THE STARS IN THE SKY."

"IN THE TOWNS AND CITIES OF EFTAL WERE STILL PRESERVED MANY OF THE MIRACULOUS TECHNOLOGIES FROM BEFORE THE SEVEN DAYS OF FIRE. IN THE FACTORIES, GENIUSES WORKED THEIR WONDERS. GIANT SHIPS WERE BUILT, THE LIKE OF WHICH NO LONGER PLY THE HEAVENS, FLYING HITHER AND YON ON MISSIONS OF TRADE."

"BUT IN TIME, A SHADOW FELL UPON THE PEACE THAT PREVAILED IN EFTAL. SPARKS FROM A DISPUTE OVER THE SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE SPREAD ACROSS THE COUNTRY, AND GREW INTO ENDLESS CIVIL WAR."

"THE WARRIORS VIED TO OUTFIT THEMSELVES WITH WEAPONS OF OHMU SHELL. THE ARMS MERCHANTS SCOURED THE FOREST IN SEARCH OF CAST-OFF SHELLS."

FIRED BY GREED, THEY MADE NO EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND THE FOREST, AND IN TIME FOUND CUNNING WAYS TO HUNT DOWN AND KILL THE OHMU.

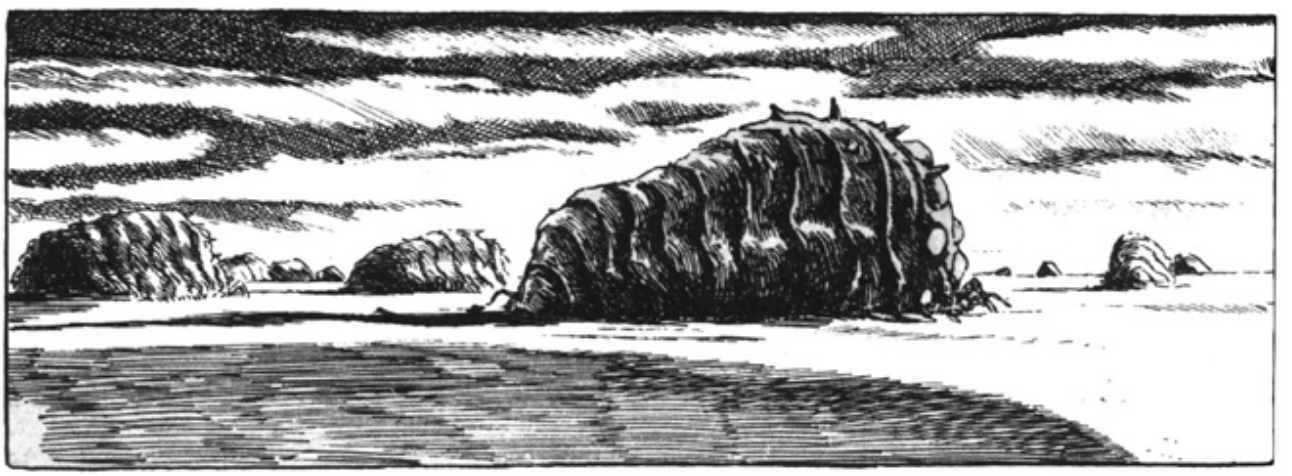
"THE SECRET OF THEIR METHODS HAS NOT SURVIVED THE YEARS. BUT THE OHMU WERE SLAUGHTERED IN FEARSOME NUMBERS..."

"THE WORMHANDLERS WHO ROAM THE FOREST TODAY ARE THE DESCENDANTS OF THOSE CURSED ARMS MERCHANTS, THOSE WHO DESTROYED THEIR HOMELAND BY THEIR OWN HANDS."

"THE SEA OF CORRUPTION TREMBLED WITH RAGE-- AND IN THE END, IT OVERFLOWED. COUNTLESS MADDENED OHMU CHARGED WILDLY FROM THE FOREST."
"A TIDAL WAVE OF INSECTS, SCATTERING SPORES LIKE THE FOAM ON THE OCEAN..."

"ALL EFFORTS TO STOP THEM WERE IN VAIN. THE GIANT TIDE OF OHMU SWALLOWED UP TOWN AFTER TOWN. THE PEOPLE PERISHED. THE KING FELL. THE MIRACLE TECHNOLOGIES WERE FOREVER LOST..."

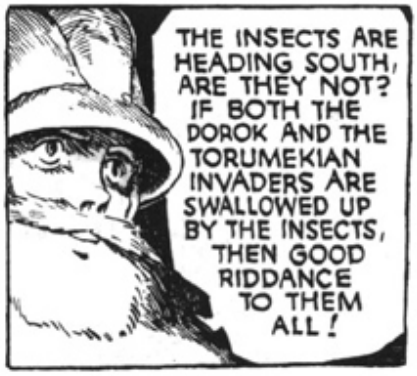
FOR TWENTY DAYS THE DAIKAISHO COVERED THE LAND OF EFTAL. THE ENRAGED OHMU WOULD NOT BE CALMED UNTIL STARVATION BROUGHT THEIR LIVES TO AN END. A FULL 2000 LEAGUES BEYOND THE FRINGES OF THE FOREST, THE OHMU FINALLY PERISHED.



"THEIR CORPSES BECAME RICH CULTURES FOR THE SPORES, WHICH STRETCHED THEIR ROOTS DEEP INTO THE SOIL IN SEARCH OF WATER. AND WHEN THEY FOUND IT, THEY BEGAN TO BLOOM. A BLACK GROWTH SPREAD FROM CORPSE TO CORPSE, UNTIL IN TIME IT HAD TRANSFORMED THE DESERT INTO A VAST NEW SEA OF CORRUPTION..."

THE TINY HANDFUL OF PEOPLE THAT SURVIVED CONTINUED TO LIVE ON THE FRINGES OF THE FOREST. NEVER AGAIN BRINGING FORTH THEIR OWN KINGS, THEY FELL UNDER THE SWAY OF THE TORUMEKIAN EMPIRE...

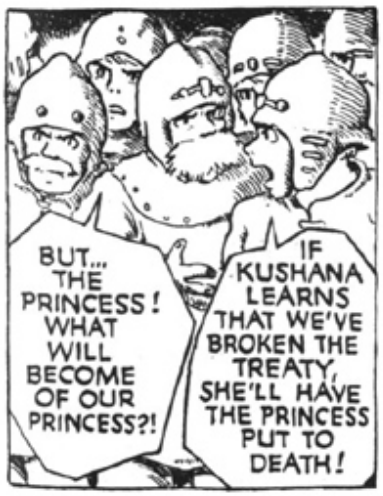
HA HA HA
AN INTERESTING TALE, MATRIARCH! LET US *HAVE* THIS DAIKAISHO!


THE INSECTS ARE HEADING SOUTH, ARE THEY NOT? IF BOTH THE DOROK AND THE TORUMEKIAN INVADERS ARE SWALLOWED UP BY THE INSECTS, THEN GOOD RIDDANCE TO THEM ALL!

Hee, hee, hee... WHAT A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE LAD YOU ARE! WHAT MATTER IF THE REST OF THE WORLD SINKS BENEATH THE SEA OF CORRUPTION, SO LONG AS WE SURVIVE OURSELVES, hmm...?

WE STILL DON'T KNOW THE TRUTH OF THIS TALE OF MADDENED INSECTS! WHAT WE *DO* KNOW IS THAT THE DOROKS AIM TO SEIZE OUR LANDS!
KUSHANA'S ARMY HAS BEEN DESTROYED. THE TORUMEKIAN MAIN FORCES ARE ABROAD. IF THE DOROKS STRIKE, THE VAI EMPEROR WILL NOT PROTECT US!

FAR FROM IT! HE'S SURE TO EVOKE THE OLD TREATIES TO CALL UP OUR ARMIES AGAIN WITHIN THE MONTH! THE TIME HAS COME TO *ABANDON* OLD TREATIES!
PEOPLE OF THE VALLEY OF WIND... LET THE TRIBES OF THE PERIPHERY RALLY ONCE AGAIN AROUND THE BANNER OF *EFTAL*! LET US BAND TOGETHER TO FACE THE DOROKS!


BUT... THE PRINCESS! WHAT WILL BECOME OF OUR PRINCESS?!
IF KUSHANA LEARNS THAT WE'VE BROKEN THE TREATY, SHE'LL HAVE THE PRINCESS PUT TO DEATH!

WE ALL ESCAPED DESTRUCTION BECAUSE OF THE PRINCESS NAUSICAÄ, AND WE ARE TRULY THANKFUL.
BUT PLEASE UNDERSTAND, JHIL... WE CANNOT SIT IDLY BY AND WAIT TO BE DESTROYED.

DON'T WORRY... ABOUT NAUSICAÄ...

THE VALLEY... WILL JOIN THE ALLIANCE... BUT WE... WE CANNOT LEND YOU OUR GUNSHIP...

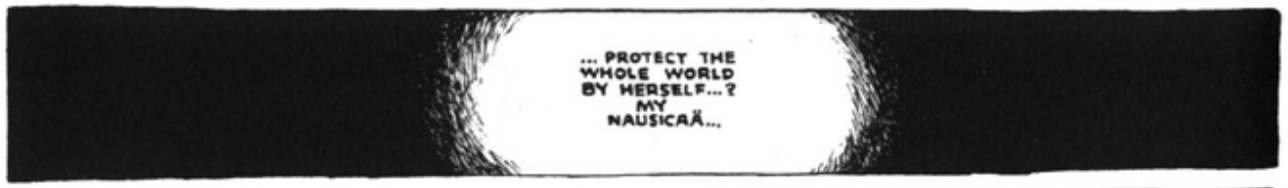
WHY NOT?! THE VALLEY GUNSHIP IS A PRECIOUS WEAPON!

NAUSICAÄ... NEEDS THAT SHIP FOR HER WORK...

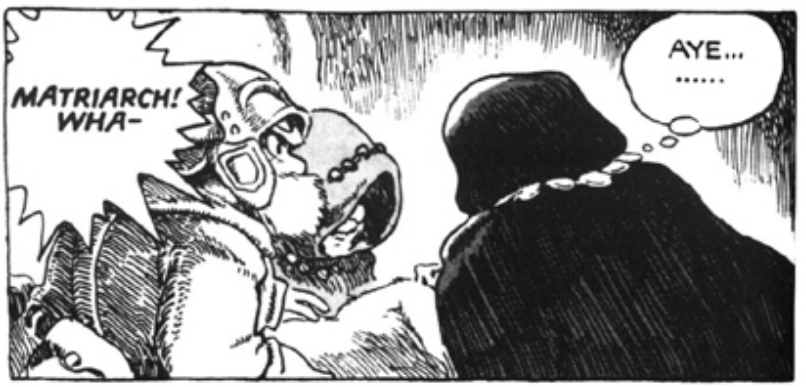
MITO...
I AM HERE, MY LIEGE.

SEARCH FOR YUPA... NAUSICAÄ NEEDS HIS AID...
I PROMISE, MY LIEGE!

THAT... FOOLISH CHILD...
DOES... DOES SHE MEAN TO...


... PROTECT THE WHOLE WORLD BY HERSELF...? MY NAUSICAÄ...

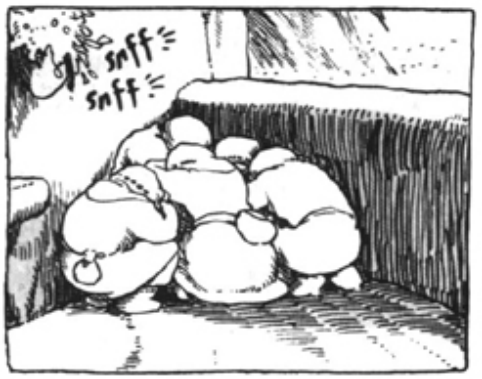
!

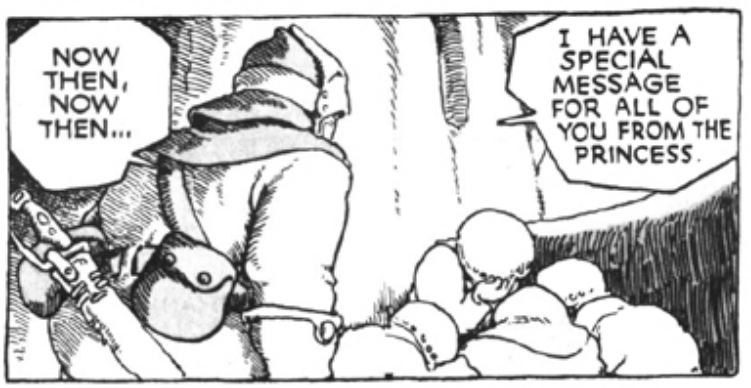

MATRIARCH! WHA-
AYE... .....

YOU ENDURED THE PAIN FOR SO LONG...
SUCH A STRONG LAD YOU WERE...

AAAAAAA!

KING JHIL IS DEAD!
NOO!
AAHHHHH
AAAHH


snff
snff


NOW THEN, NOW THEN...
I HAVE A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR ALL OF YOU FROM THE PRINCESS.

SHE SAID THE CHIKO NUTS YOU GATHERED FOR HER CAME IN VERY HANDY-- SHE SAID TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH...

WAHH
WAHH
AAHUH
POOR PRINCESS ...!

THERE, THERE, NOW... IT'S ALL RIGHT...
THE PRINCESS IS A STRONG GIRL... FAR STRONGER THAN ME...

IT'S TRUE... EVEN DURING THAT SHORT EXPEDITION, THE PRINCESS GREW SO MUCH...

SHE SEES SO MUCH FARTHER THAN THE REST OF US...
.....
I REMEMBER...

PRIN-CESS...?

MAY I COME IN?
OF COURSE...

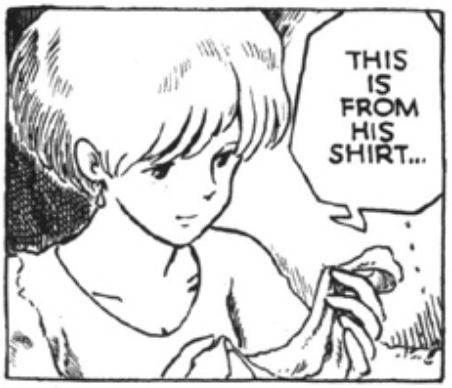
STILL AWAKE, UNCLE MITO? WHAT IS IT?

I CAN'T JUST SEND YOU OFF UNEQUIPPED. I'VE GATHERED TOGETHER WHAT I COULD.
THANK YOU.

Hm? THAT BANDAGE... WHAT...?

THIS ...?
Oh, IT'S NOTHING. I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.

ASBEL BANDAGED IT FOR ME.

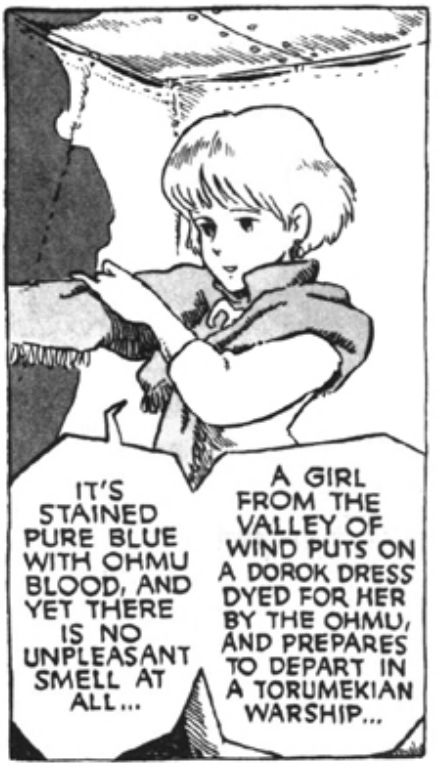

THIS IS FROM HIS SHIRT...

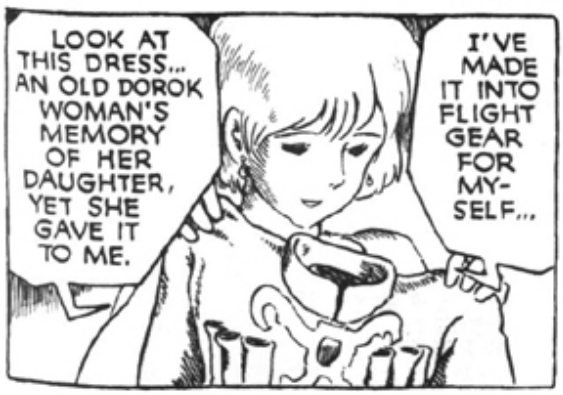
MITO... WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK ANGRY...

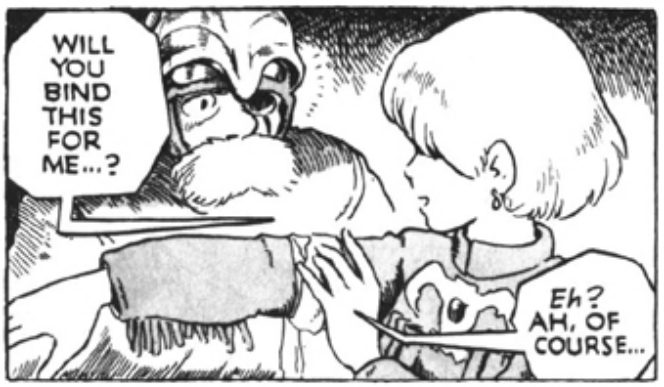
PRINCESS... ..... I KNOW I CAN'T STOP YOU...

...BUT I CAN'T HELP WORRYING. PRINCESS, YOU ARE TOO GENTLE-- SO GENTLE YOU MAY END UP DESTROYING YOURSELF. AND THEN...
I SHOULDN'T SAY THIS, BUT... IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU'RE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FATE OF THE OHMU THAN ABOUT US PEOPLE.

THERE'S AN OLD SAYING, "LOOK NOT INTO THE HEART OF THE OHMU." THEY SAY IF YOU DO, YOU'LL NEVER COME BACK...
I'M JUST A FOOLISH OLD MAN AND I DON'T RIGHTLY UNDERSTAND... BUT YOU SEEM TO BE GOING EVER DEEPER INTO THE WORLD OF THE GREAT INSECTS, PRINCESS... AS IF...


IT'S STAINED PURE BLUE WITH OHMU BLOOD, AND YET THERE IS NO UNPLEASANT SMELL AT ALL...
A GIRL FROM THE VALLEY OF WIND PUTS ON A DOROK DRESS DYED FOR HER BY THE OHMU, AND PREPARES TO DEPART IN A TORUMEKIAN WARSHIP...

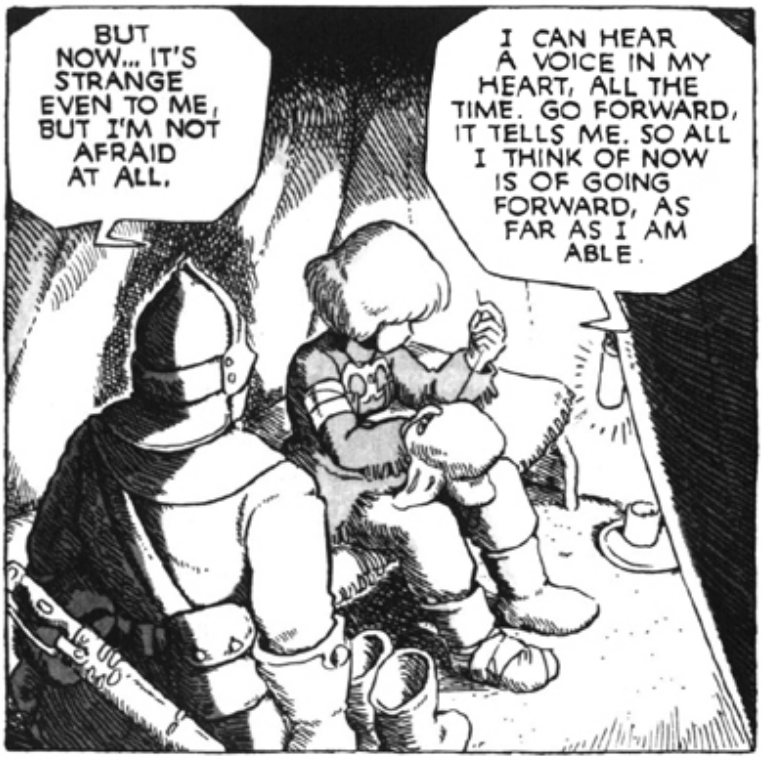

LOOK AT THIS DRESS... AN OLD DOROK WOMAN'S MEMORY OF HER DAUGHTER, YET SHE GAVE IT TO ME.
I'VE MADE IT INTO FLIGHT GEAR FOR MYSELF...


WILL YOU BIND THIS FOR ME...?
Eh? AH, OF COURSE...

I LOVE THE OHMU... I THINK THEY ARE THE GREATEST, THE MOST NOBLE CREATURES IN ALL THE WORLD.

BUT IN THE SAME WAY, I LOVE ALL THE PEOPLE OF OUR VALLEY. I'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN THEM... OR THE PERSON WHO MADE THIS BANDAGE FOR ME.

WHEN I LEFT THE VALLEY, IT HURT SO MUCH... I WAS SO AFRAID.


BUT NOW... IT'S STRANGE EVEN TO ME, BUT I'M NOT AFRAID AT ALL.
I CAN HEAR A VOICE IN MY HEART, ALL THE TIME. GO FORWARD, IT TELLS ME. SO ALL I THINK OF NOW IS OF GOING FORWARD, AS FAR AS I AM ABLE.

I MADE THIS HELMET FROM THE MATERIAL LEFT OVER AFTER I SHORTENED THE HEM. I'LL PUT IN THE LENSES LATER...
ISN'T IT STRANGE? I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THAT I'M NOT ALONE. IT'S AS IF ALL THESE PEOPLE ARE WATCHING OVER ME...

.....
.....
PRINCESS!

I MADE THESE LEGGINGS FROM MY SPARE TROUSERS-- PLEASE TAKE THEM!
I'VE FIXED THE CONTROL BAR ON YOUR MEHVE... SHE'LL FLY JUST LIKE NEW!
THESE SIREN SHELLS ARE MY OWN HANDMADE SPECIALS-- THEY'LL MAKE A FINE SOUND!
I'VE REWORKED THESE GLOVES TO FIT YOU... THEY'RE A BIT DIRTY, BUT PLEASE ACCEPT THEM!
Oh, THANK YOU! ALL OF YOU!

VRNNRNN

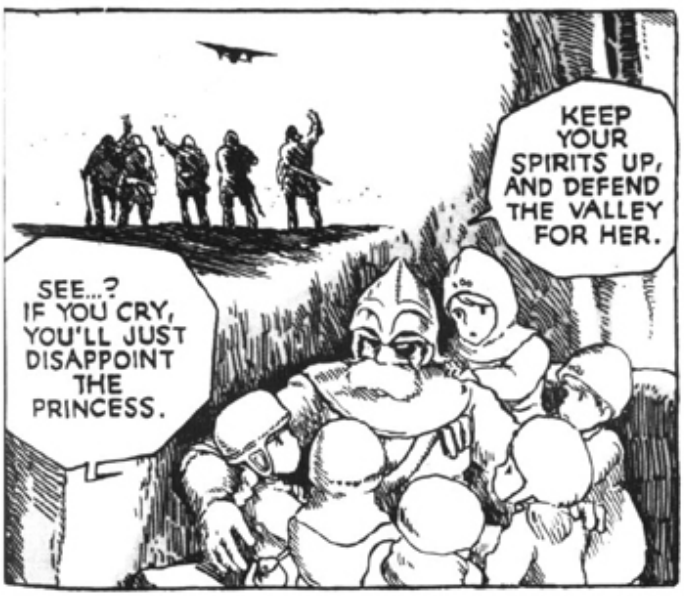
KAI, I'M COUNTING ON YOU...!

THANK YOU, EVERY-ONE...

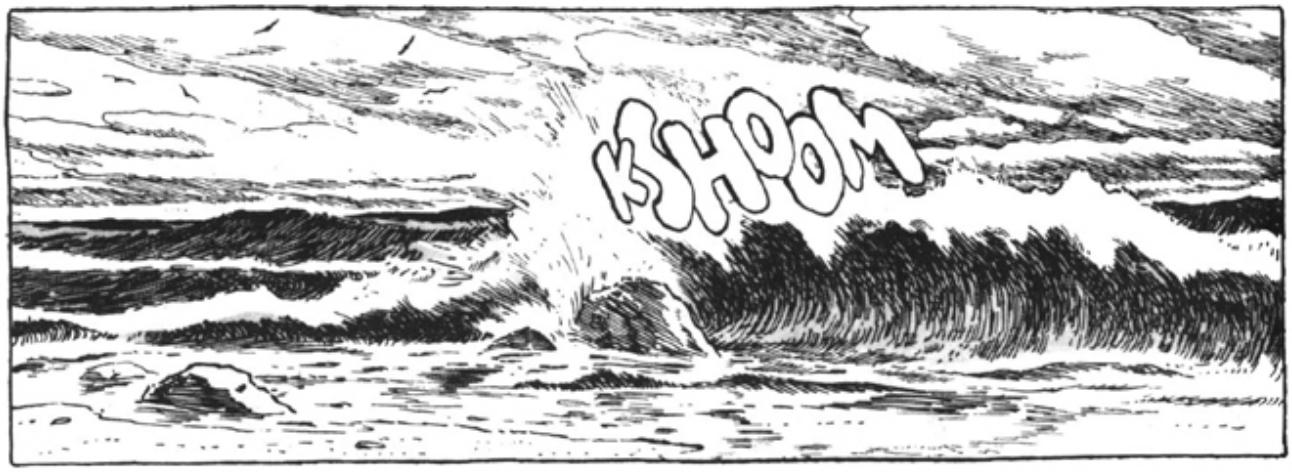
FARE-WELL! GOOD HEALTH!
VRNNRNN

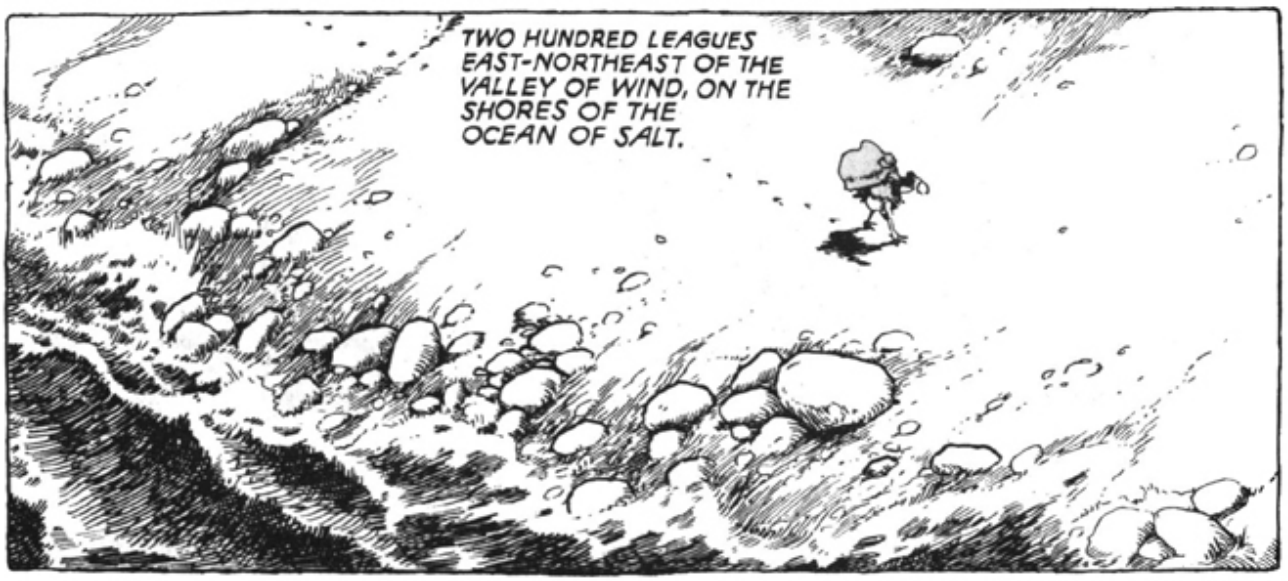
...THANK YOU FROM MY HEART FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR ME.

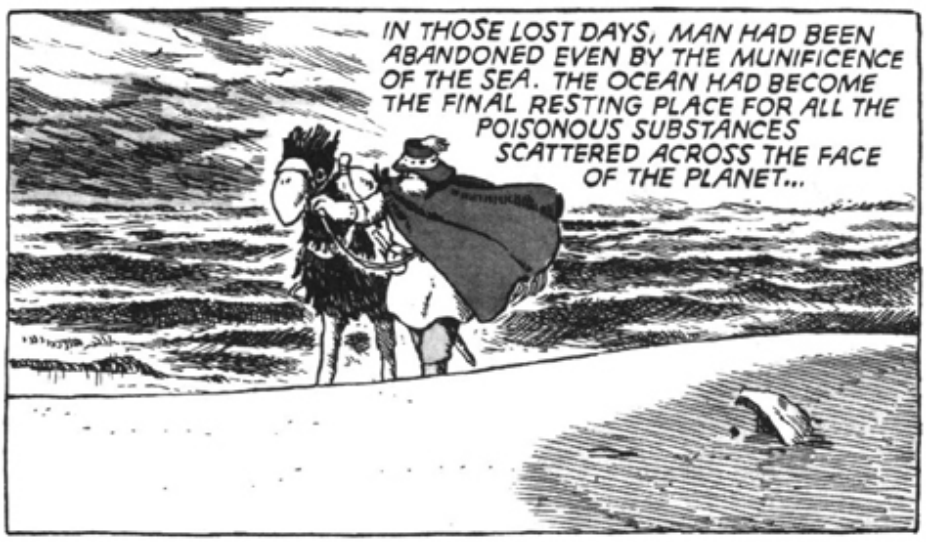
VRRNNN


KEEP YOUR SPIRITS UP, AND DEFEND THE VALLEY FOR HER.
SEE...? IF YOU CRY, YOU'LL JUST DISAPPOINT THE PRINCESS.

I'LL BRING MASTER YUPA BACK FOR YOU, I SWEAR. MAY YOU BE SAFE UNTIL THEN...


KHOOM


TWO HUNDRED LEAGUES EAST-NORTHEAST OF THE VALLEY OF WIND, ON THE SHORES OF THE OCEAN OF SALT.


IN THOSE LOST DAYS, MAN HAD BEEN ABANDONED EVEN BY THE MUNIFICENCE OF THE SEA. THE OCEAN HAD BECOME THE FINAL RESTING PLACE FOR ALL THE POISONOUS SUBSTANCES SCATTERED ACROSS THE FACE OF THE PLANET...

NONE WERE LEFT NOW WHO KNEW THAT ONCE, IN AN AGE EVEN OLDER THAN THE SEVEN DAYS OF FIRE, THIS IMMENSE CERAMIC STRUCTURE HAD BEEN A SHIP FOR TRAVELING TO THE STARS...

KANGG KANG

KANG KANG KANG

NOW IT HAD BECOME A MINE FOR SUPERHARD CERAMICS, AND GRADUALLY, IT WAS BEING CHIPPED AWAY...

FOR GENERATIONS, THE SHIP HAD SUPPORTED A SMALL MINING TOWN.

THIS TOWN, IN THE DOMAIN OF THE INDUSTRIAL CITY OF **SEMO**, WAS BUSTLING WITH ENERGY-- ENERGY IT OWED TO THE TORUMEKIAN WAR ECONOMY...

A MEAL FOR YOU, SWORDS-MAN?

MM... AND A WORD WITH THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE.

A SHIP FOR THE ROTWOOD, eh? THAT'LL BE RIGHT HARD TO COME BY, THESE DAYS...

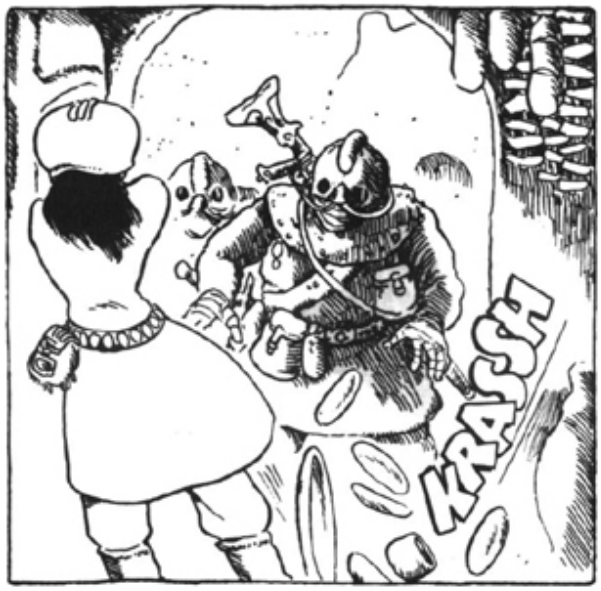
THERE BE PLENTY OF CARGO TORUMEKIA-BOUND, BUT NONE BE WANTING TO GO TO THAT VILE ROTWOOD.
THAT'LL BE FIVE RUMII, GOOD SIR.

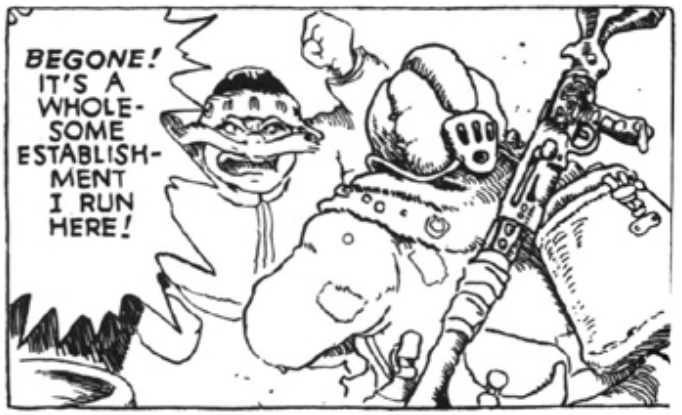
AAAHH! A TRUE TARIA RIVERSTONE, IS IT NOT? IS IT REALLY FOR ME, SIR?!
IT'S GORGEOUS!

OI! WHAT ARE YOU UP TO? PART OF THAT'S FOR HIS MEAL, LASS!
MASTER, WHAT SHIP IS THAT...?

DIDN'T IT USED TO BE THE SHUTTLE TO THE JEWEL PROSPECTING CAMPS?
Ahh, THAT ONE... AYE, IT SHOULD BE GOING YOUR WAY, BUT IT'S NO FIT SHIP FOR UPSTANDIN' FOLK TO GO ARIDING...

EEEK!


KRASH


BEGONE! IT'S A WHOLESOME ESTABLISHMENT I RUN HERE!

WORM-HANDLERS...?! IN THIS TOWN? WHY...?

W-WINE... GIVE US... WE HAVE MONEY...

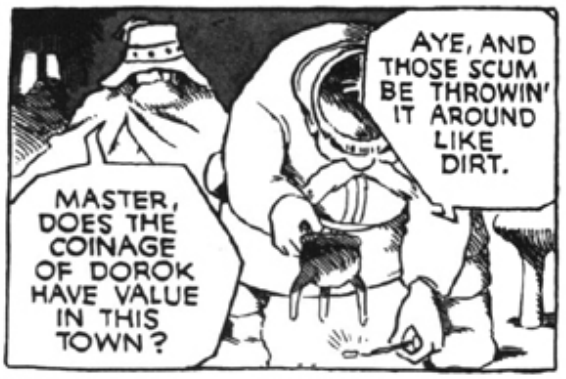
GEHH! STAY BACK, YOU STINKING SCUM!
DON'T YOU DARE BE COMIN' INTO MY GOOD SHOP-- OUTSIDE WITH YE!
MONEY... WE PAY...

FORGIVE THE DISTURBANCE, MOST HONORED GUESTS! PLEASE SIT DOWN, RELAX!
IYHA! GET THEM THE USUAL, AND QUICKLY!

CHINK

?!
DOROK IMPERIUMS!

Hmph... FILTHY...
Heh, heh... ALL'S WELL, NOW! PLEASE... ENJOY YOUR MEALS... PLEASE!


MASTER, DOES THE COINAGE OF DOROK HAVE VALUE IN THIS TOWN?
AYE, AND THOSE SCUM BE THROWIN' IT AROUND LIKE DIRT.

THIS GOLD'S BETTER QUALITY THAN TORUMEKIAN, EVEN... BUT WHEN IT BE SO FOULED...

YOU'VE ONLY TO LEAVE IT OUTSIDE! GO!
BUT, FATHER...

HERE, LET ME TAKE IT. THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK THEM, ANYWAY.
Ah, SIR! YOU'VE A KIND HEART, SIR!

FATHER, I DON'T WANT TO GO! I'M AFRAID!

IF THIS IS ALL THEY GET FOR THEIR GOLD, THEN YOUR WINE IS FAR TOO DEAR. I'LL TAKE SOME OF THIS JERKY, TOO.
BUT THAT'S THE GOING RATE FOR FILTH LIKE THEM...! AARR, BLAST IT ALL! GO AHEAD, THEN-- DO AS YOU WILL!

I THANK YOU KINDLY, SWORDSMAN!
WELL, NOW, EVEN WORMHANDLERS ARE HUMAN. YOU KNOW... IT'S NOT GOOD TO HATE THEM SO.

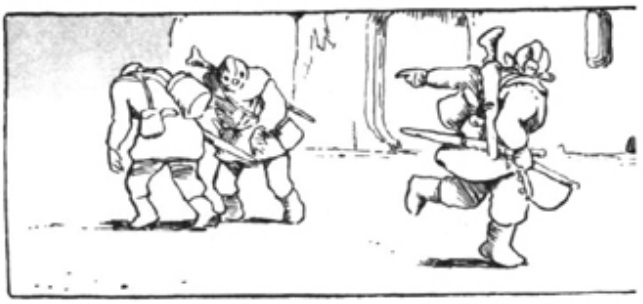
WHOK
PHEEE!
KRAK

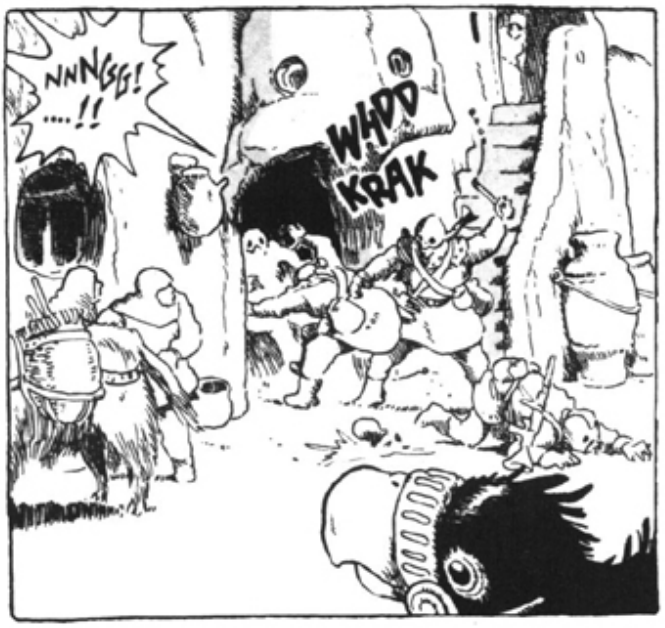
KRAK
AAA

KRAK
WHOK
GYAA!

< YOU WORTHLESS TRASH! >

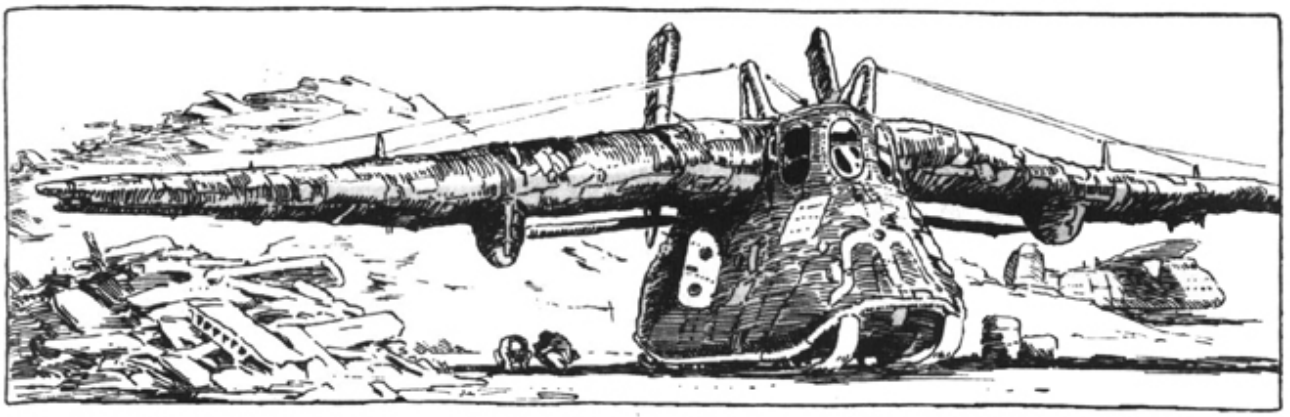
< GET BACK TO THE SHIP!! >

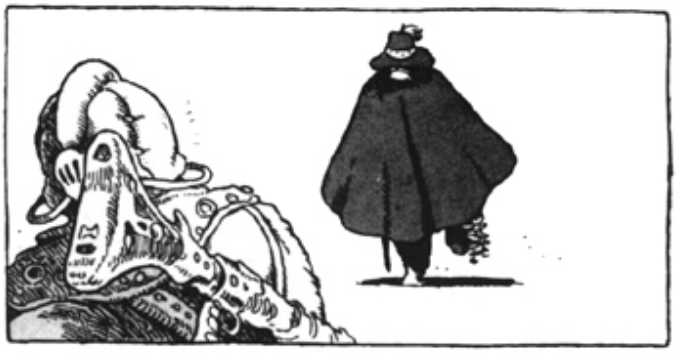



NNNGG! ....!!
WHDD
KRAK

MY APOLOGIES, BUT COULD YOUR OSTLER SEE TO MY HORSECLAW FOR A WHILE?
OF... OF COURSE, SIR...

KRAK
WHDD
WHOK



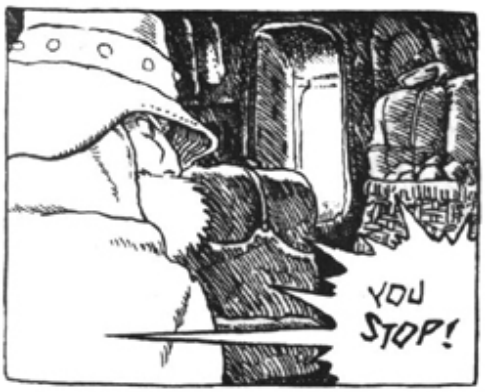


WHAT THIS? YOU BRING ALL WAY HERE FOR US?

SO THIS IS YOUR SHIP, hmm? ARE YOU BOUND FOR THE FOREST?

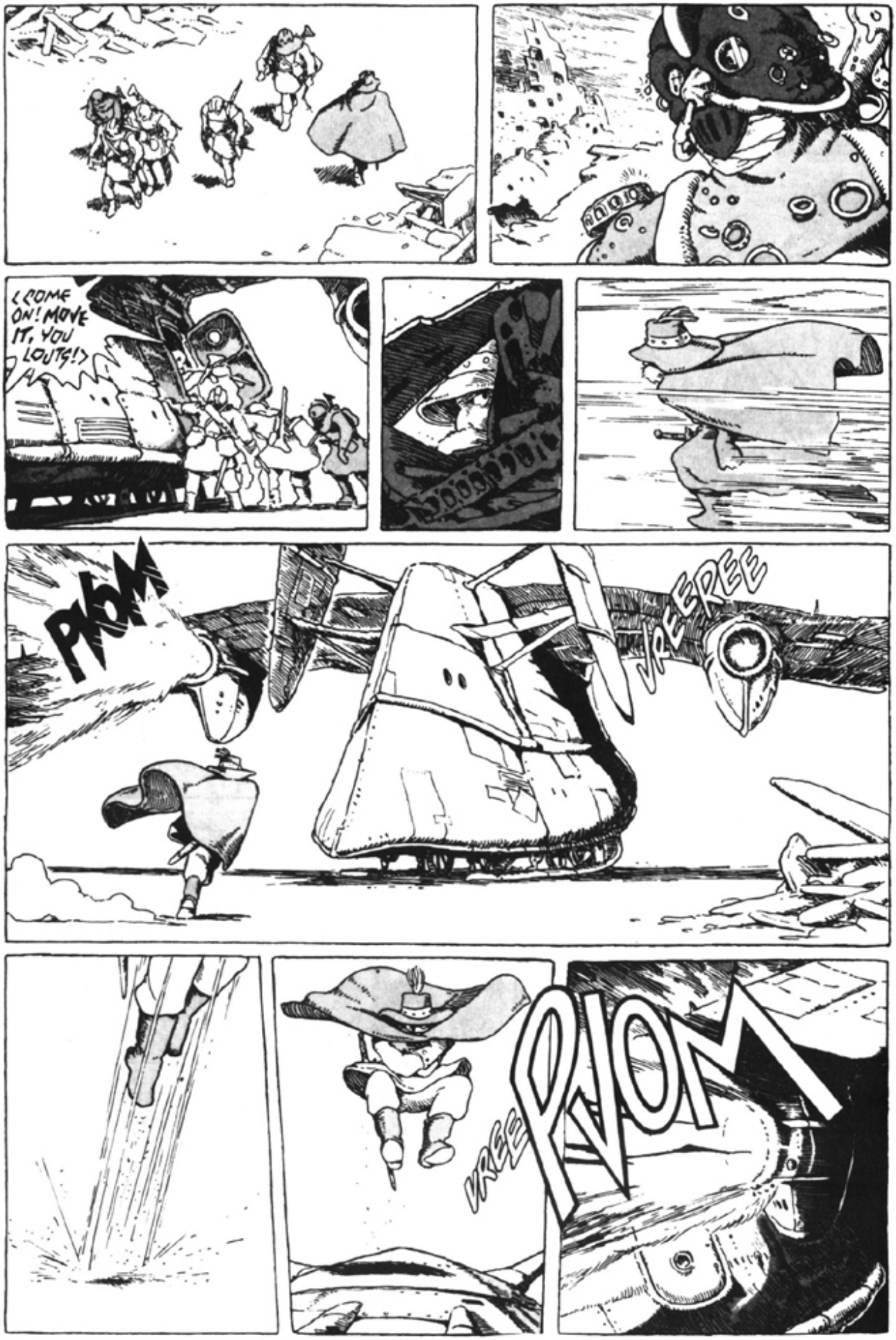
WE GO BACK TO VILLAGE IN FOREST SOON. GOOD TO HAVE SHIP... COME TO TOWN, EAT GOOD FOOD...
TO OWN SHIP IS OLD, OLD DREAM...
MACH

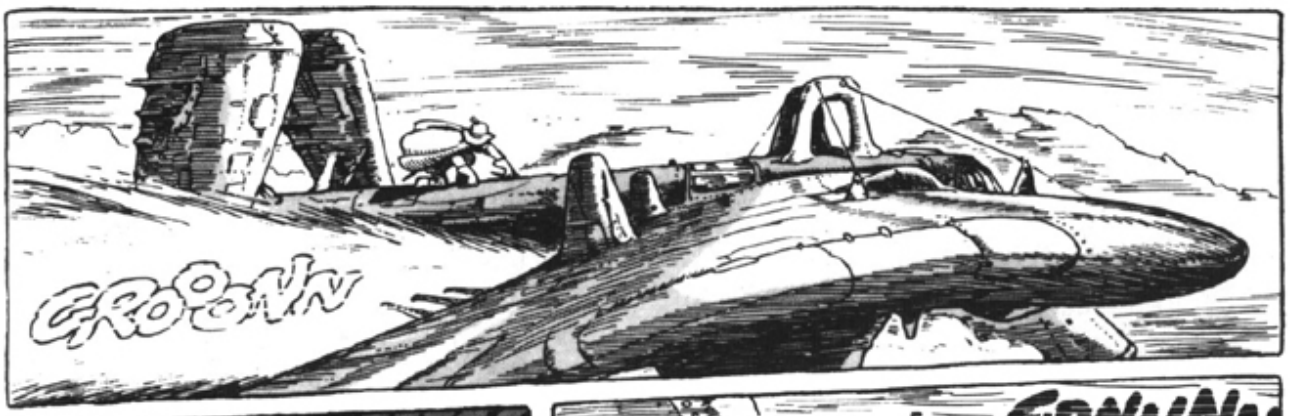
IS YOUR CAPTAIN AROUND? I SEEK PASSAGE TO THE HEART OF THE FOREST...


YOU STOP!

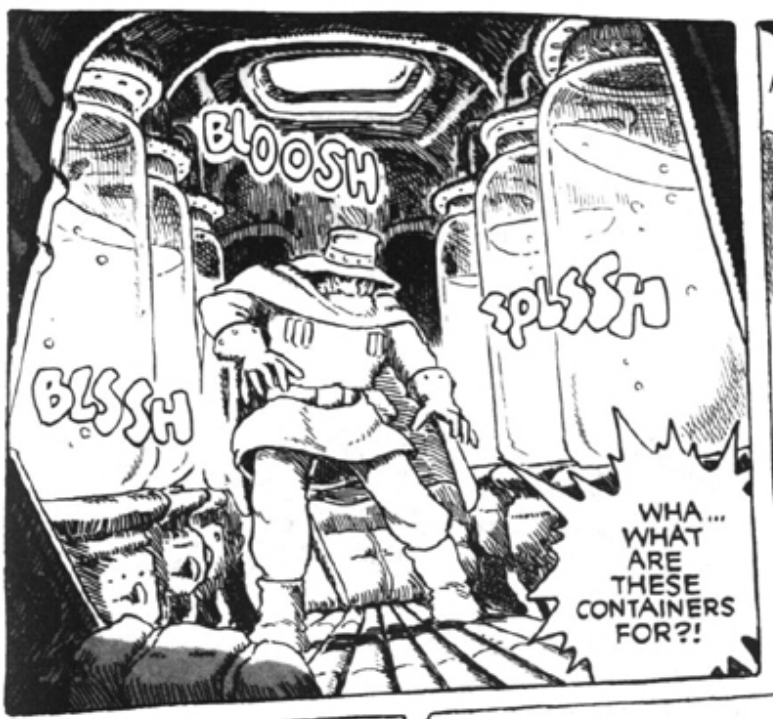
YOU SEE ANY-THING?
NO...
IT GOOD YOU NO SEE ANYTHING. YOU GOOD MAN.

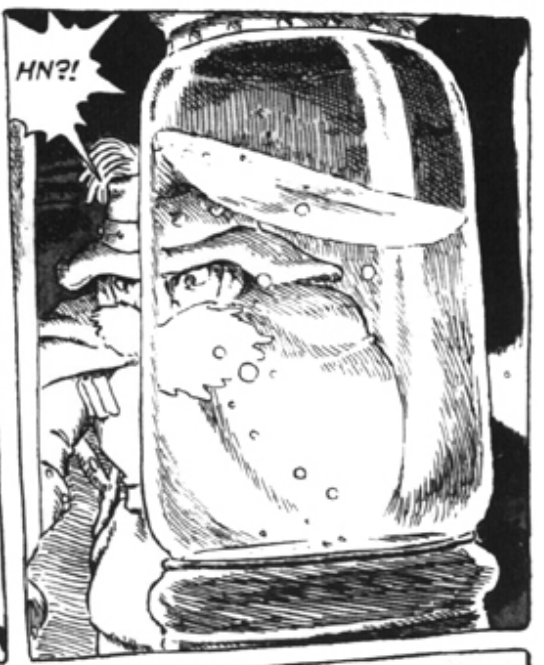
WE NO WANT KILL YOU. PLEASE GO AWAY NOW.


(COME ON! MOVE IT, YOU LOUTS!)
PIOM
VREEREE
VREE
PIOM

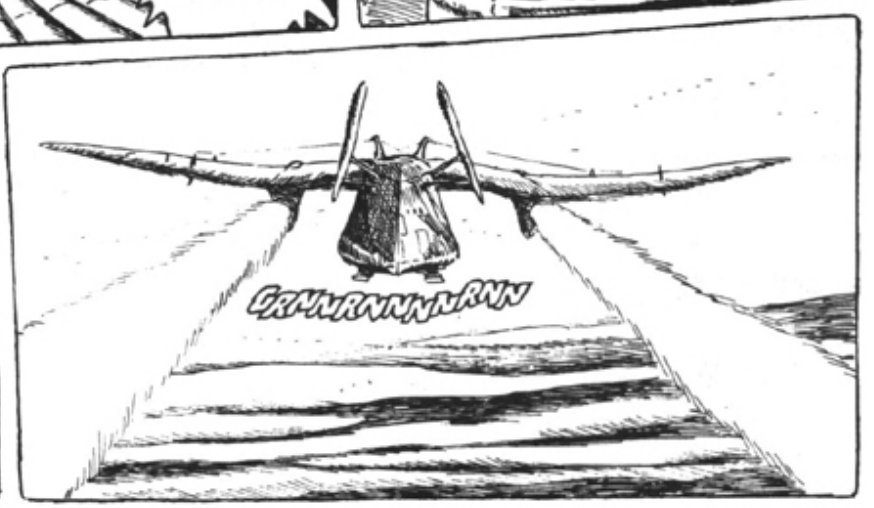

GROOWN

GRNNNN


BLOOSH
SPLSSH
BLSSH
WHA... WHAT ARE THESE CONTAINERS FOR?!


HN?!

FRAGMENTS... BITS OF EGGSHELL ...?

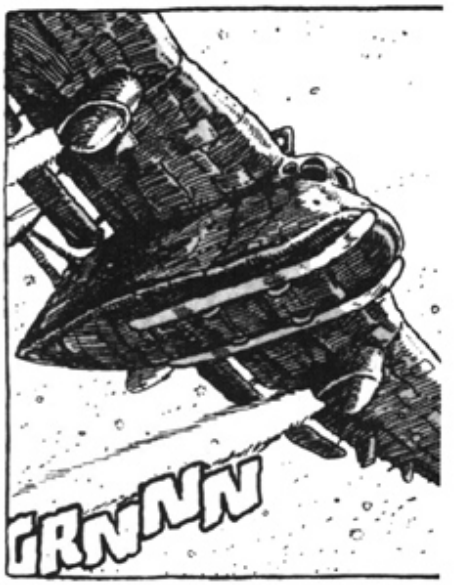

GRNNRNNNNRNN

SHFFF
SHFFF
SSSSSSS
SHFFE
FFFHHH
FFFHHH

PFF

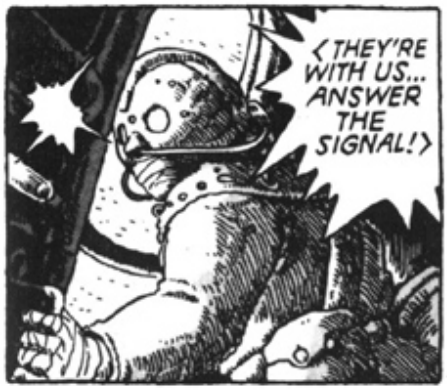
SSSHH
FHHFHH
FFHHH

GRNNGRNN


GRNNN

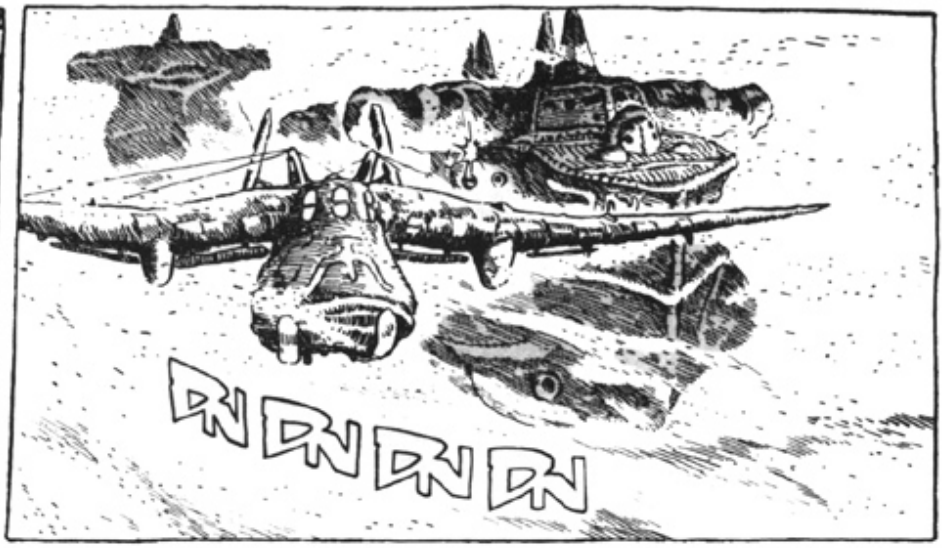
GNNNNN

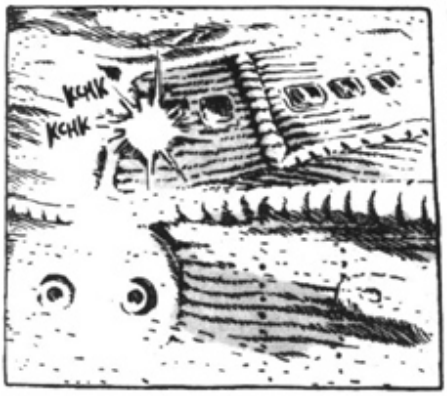
NNNNN


<THEY'RE WITH US... ANSWER THE SIGNAL!>

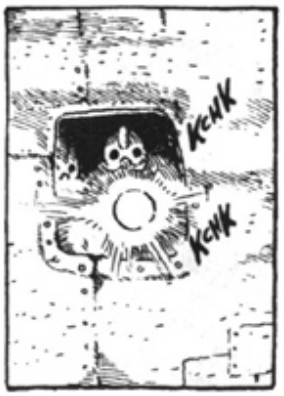
THMP THMP

!!


DN DN DN DN

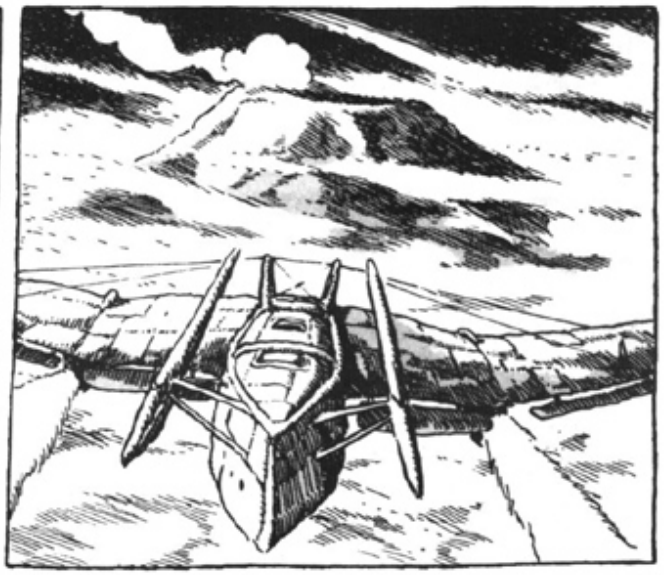

KCHK
KCHK

<THEY'RE ASKING US TO GUIDE THEM IN-- THEY WANT TO LAND AT THE VILLAGE.>
<THAT'S THE SAME CREW THAT WENT TO THE ACID LAKES... >
GNNNNNNN


KCHK
KCHK

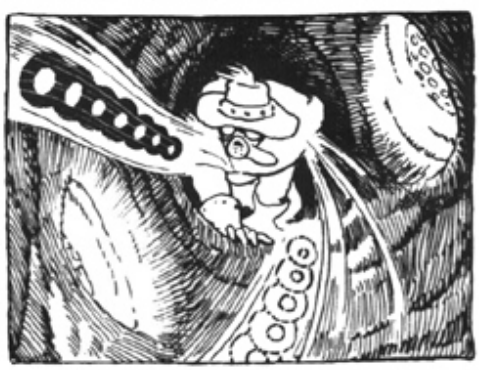
<I HEAR THEY WIPED OUT KUSHANA'S ARMY.>
<Heh, heh... THOSE FELLOWS WHO SIGNED UP WITH THE TORUMEKIANS GOT THE SHORT END OF THE STICK... DONE IN, THE LOT OF THEM.>

<MY LITTLE BROTHER GOT HIRED ON AS A COMMANDO... YOU DON'T SUPPOSE HE'S...>



GRNNRNN
SKSSSHHH
SPLSH
BLSSH
FIRST THOSE CONTAINERS... AND NOW DOROKS CALLING ON A WORM-HANDLER ENCLAVE. VERY STRANGE... SOMETHING'S GOING ON HERE...

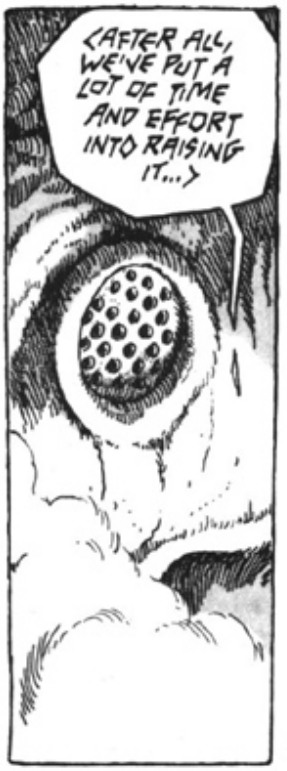
Hmm...
THEY'RE USING SUB-TERRANEAN GASES TO PURIFY THEIR AIR...



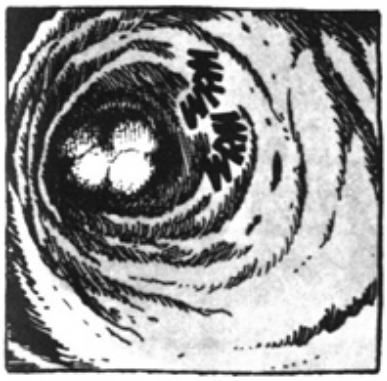
<SO! THE MANI TRIBE DARES DISOBEY THE ORDERS OF THE HOLY EMPEROR!>
<I SAID NO SUCH THING! YOU TWIST MY WORDS!>
THE DOROK TONGUE ...
<THE BIDA TRIBE WARRIORS WERE DESTROYED TO THE LAST MAN, CAUGHT IN THEIR OWN TRAP. IT'S A GRAVE ERROR TO USE THE OHMU IN WAR.>
<I ASK ONLY THAT OPERATIONS BE TEMPORARILY POSTPONED WHILE WE ASK THE HOLY EMPEROR TO RECONSIDER.>
<THE INCIDENT WITH THE BIDA TRIBE WAS ONLY AN INITIAL MISCALCULATION. SUCH SACRIFICES CAN BE AVOIDED AS WE REFINE OUR TECHNIQUES.>
<THE OHMU ARE NOTHING MORE THAN INSECTS. NEED WE MOURN THESE WORMS IF THEY DIE TO DESTROY THE TORUMEKIAN ARMIES AND DEFEND OUR HOMELAND?>
<YOUR INSISTENCE ON TREATING THE OHMU AS SACRED IS PROOF THE MANI TRIBE HAS NOT BEEN PURGED OF THE ANCIENT HERESIES!>
<MOREOVER, YOU ABANDONED THE PURSUIT WITHOUT PERMISSION, ALLOWING KUSHANA TO ESCAPE FROM UNDER OUR VERY NOSES! IF THIS IS NOT TREASON, THEN WHAT IS?!>
<THE MANI TRIBE DEFIES THE HOLY EMPEROR AND THE COUNCIL OF MONKS!!>
.....
.....

hehen
<AHRG... BE DONE WITH ALL THIS BICKERING! THE INS AND OUTS OF YOUR WAR ARE OF NO CONCERN TO US.>

<WE HAVE THE GOODS YOU ORDERED, AND WE'RE MORE THAN READY TO DELIVER THEM... ONCE WE'VE BEEN PAID.>


<AFTER ALL, WE'VE PUT A LOT OF TIME AND EFFORT INTO RAISING IT...>

... RAISING IT...? NO... IT CAN'T BE...


WRM WRM

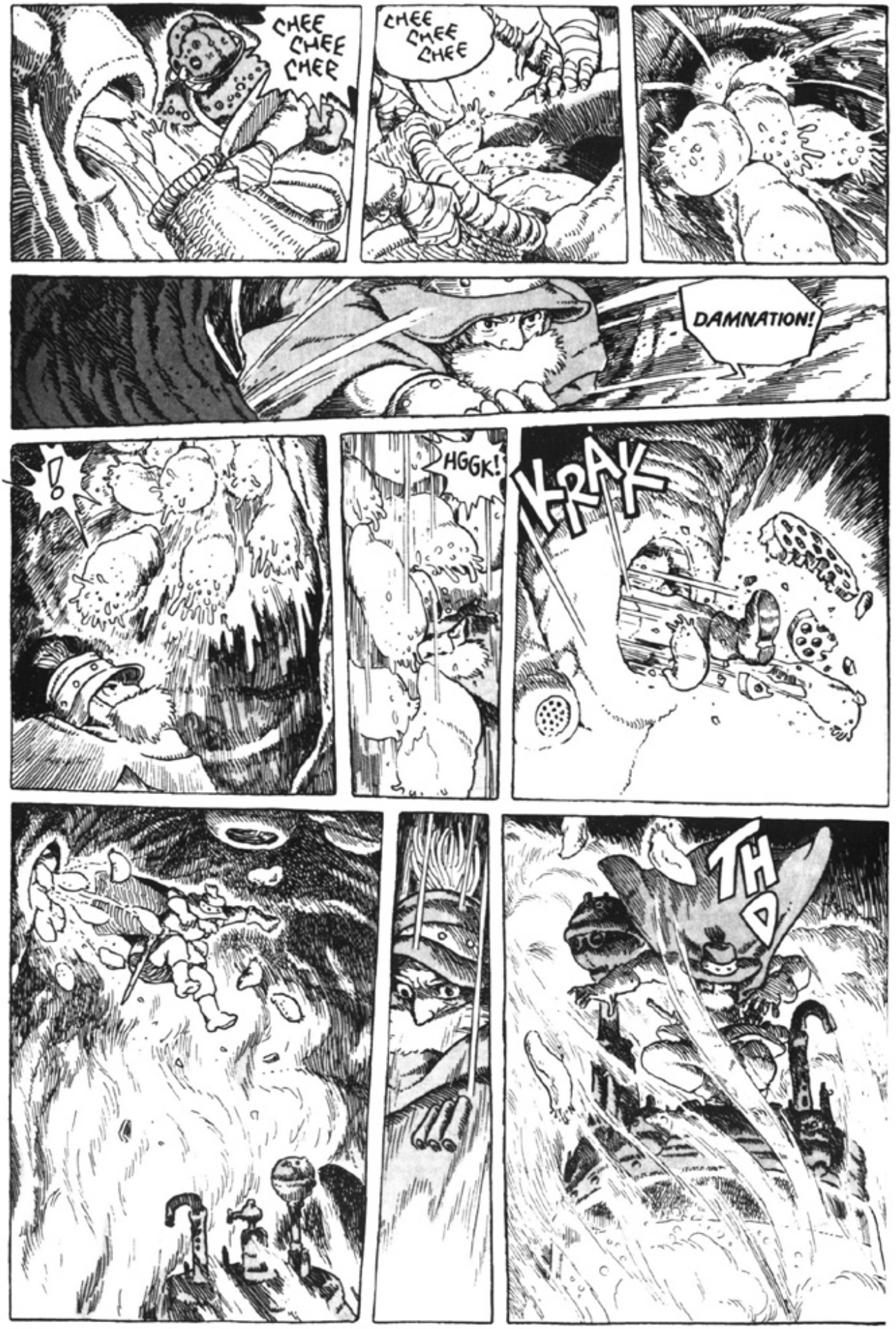
WRM WRM
SNFF
SNFF

BLAST!

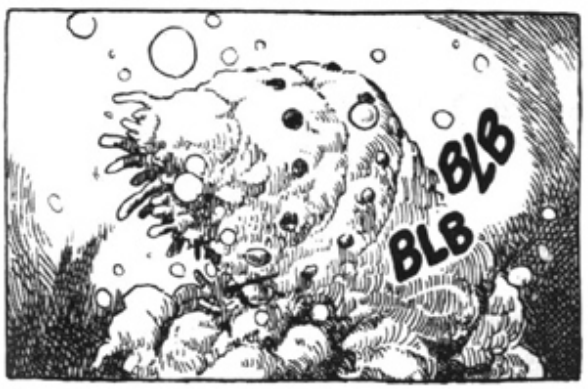
F♪WEE♪
<SOMEONE'S HIDING IN THE AIR DUCTS!>

<FIND HIM! HE MAY BE A SPY FROM ANOTHER ENCLAVE!>

<WOMEN AND CHILDREN STAY IN THEIR QUARTERS!>
<SEAL THE EXITS! DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE!>

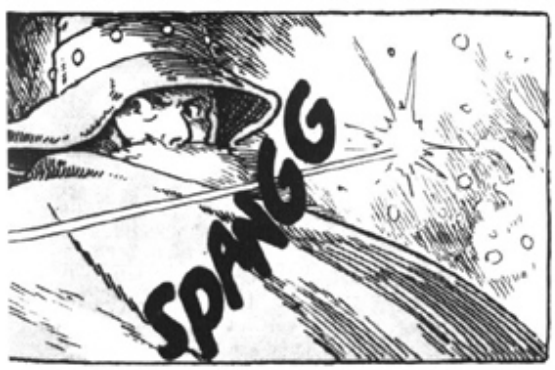

CHEE CHEE CHEE
CHEE CHEE CHEE
DAMNATION!
!
HGGK!
KRAK
THD

WHAT THE DEVIL IS THIS?!

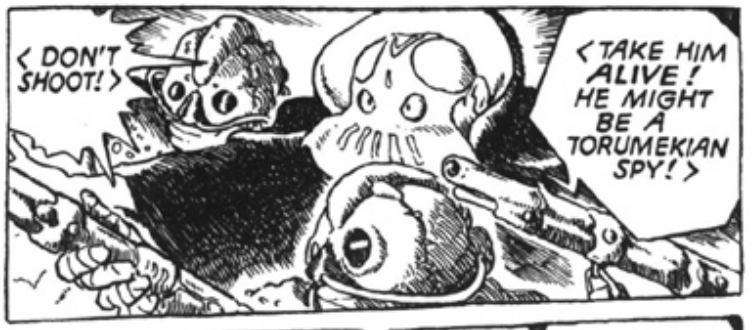

BLB
BLB

IT'S A BUDDING OHMU!

BLAM


SPANGG

<DON'T MOVE!>


<DON'T SHOOT!>
<TAKE HIM ALIVE! HE MIGHT BE A TORUMEKIAN SPY!>

YOU MUST BE FROM THE COUNCIL OF MONKS-- DIRECT ADVISORS TO THE HOLY EMPEROR!
WHAT EVIL ARE YOU PLOTTING, SCATTERING GOLD TO THE WORM-HANDLERS, AND GROWING INSECTS?!

<SILENCE!>
<YOU HAVE SEEN TOO MUCH! YOU CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THE SURFACE!>

<SEIZE HIM!>
<WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?! GET HIM, NOW!>

<HUH, HUH, HUH... SINCE YOU WON'T LET US USE GUNS, FIRST WE HAVE TO SET A PRICE...>
<THAT FELLOW'S YUPA, THE GREATEST SWORDSMAN IN ALL THE PERIPHERY! HE'S GOING TO COST YOU, MONK.>
<YUPA ...?>

<RRRG... ONE HUNDRED GREIN, THEN!>
<HUH, HUH... MAKE IT TWO HUNDRED.>
<DAMN YOU MONEY-GRUBBING MAGGOTMEN! ONE HUNDRED FIFTY!>

<ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY, NO LESS!>
<MEN! DEFEAT YUPA, AND FAME AND FORTUNE ARE YOURS!!>
CLK

Shing
KRANGG
HGGGK!
AAA!
<YIEE! HE'S AS GOOD AS THEY SAY!>
<EVEN ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY'S TOO CHEAP FOR THE LIKES OF HIM!>
RAUGGH!
<FOOLS! IDIOTS! HAVE YOU NO SHAME?!>

< HUH, HUH, HUH! HE CAN'T GET OUT... WE'LL TAKE HIM LIKE AN INSECT! >
....

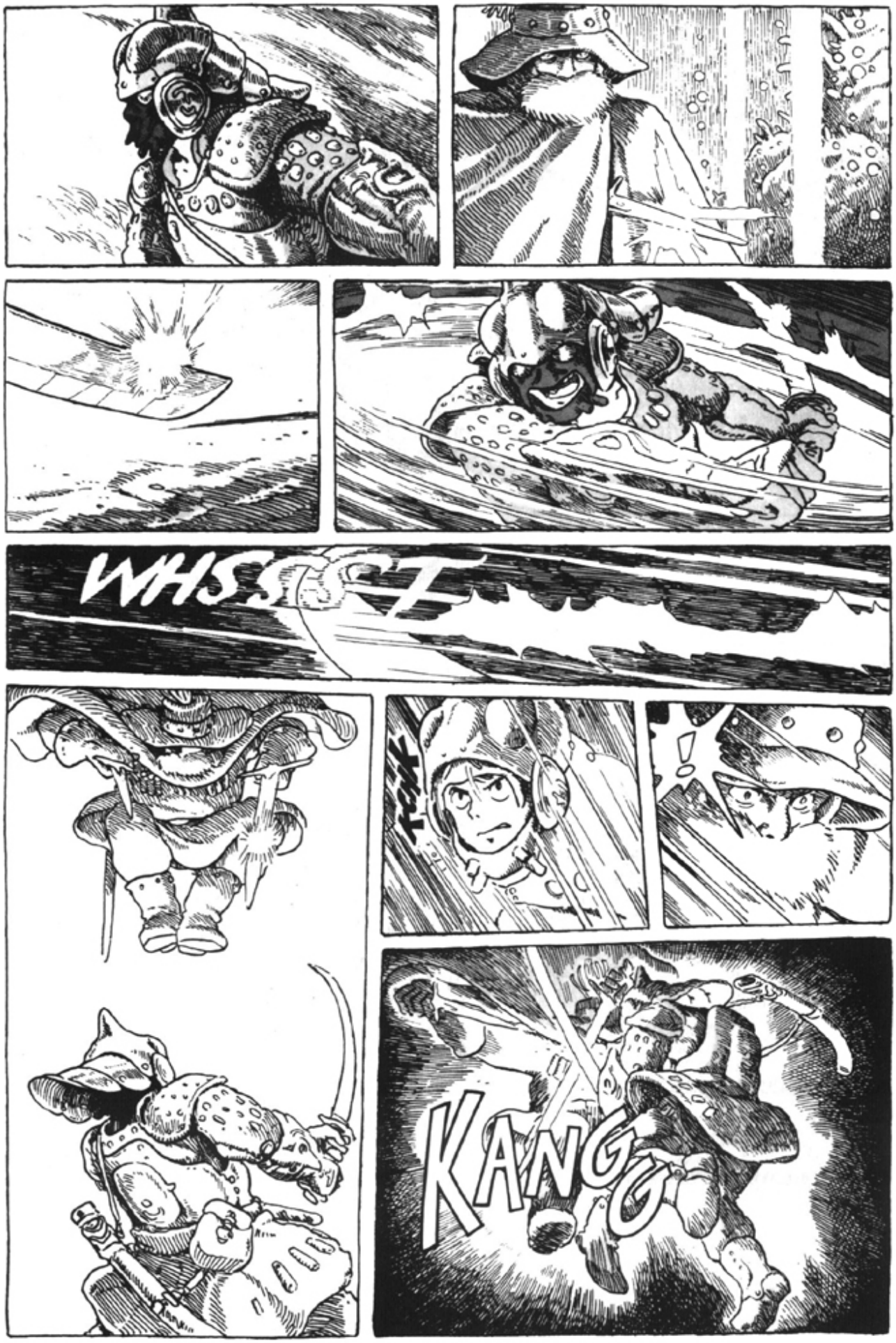
WIP WIP

< WAIT!! >

< ARE YE NOT SHAMED TO FIGHT THUS AGAINST A SINGLE MAN? >
< A MANI TRIBE WARRIOR...! >

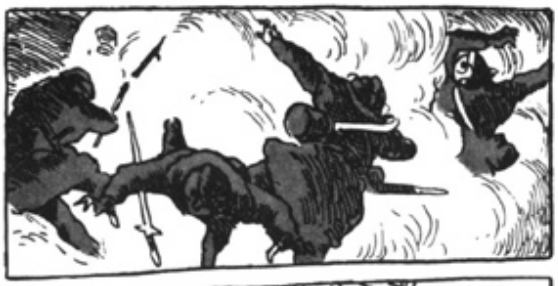
< HONORABLE MONKS-- PLEASE LEAVE THIS CUR TO ME. >
< VERY WELL... TAKE HIM! >

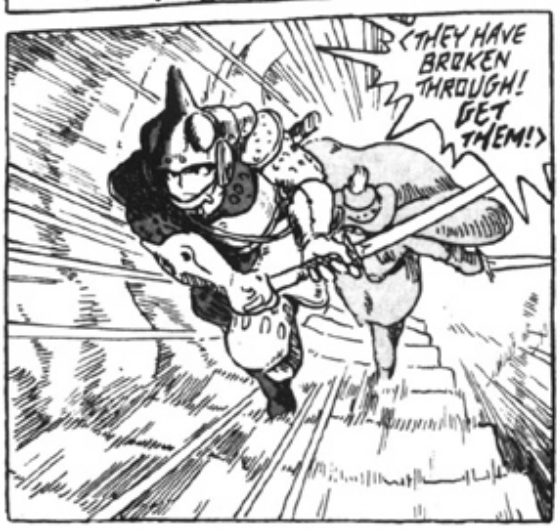
< OUT OF MY WAY! LET NO ONE INTER-VENE! >


WHSSSST
!
KANGG

I'LL HELP YOU...!
WHO ARE YOU, BOY?!
ASBEL OF PEJITEI!!
WHUSSST
SKASSH
<AIEE! THE CULTURE TANK!!>
KRADOSH

KOOSH
AAA!
<THE OHMU!>
<THE OHMU WILL AWAKE! KILL IT! KILL THE OHMU!>
GHOK
KANG KANG
KSHHHH
<TRAITORS! TRAITORS!!>
<DON'T PANIC, YOU FOOLS! IT'S ONLY STEAM! REINFORCE THE EXITS!>
KANG KANG
AAA!
GHAA!
<THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!>



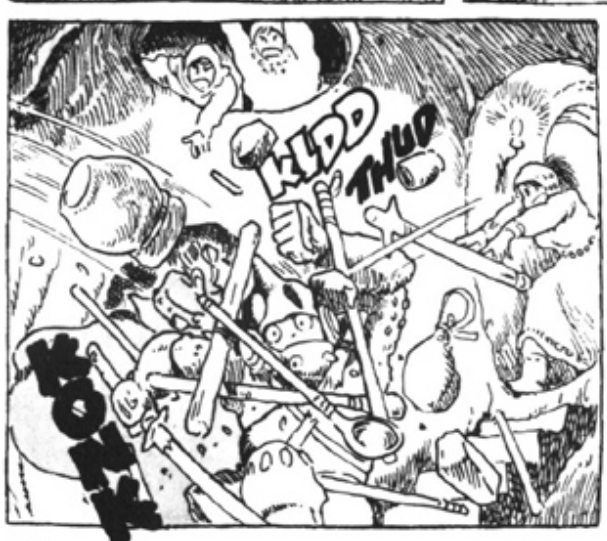

<THEY HAVE BROKEN THROUGH! GET THEM!>

HYAA!

KYAA!

WHOP
WHOP
KDD

YEOW !!


KDD
THUD
KONK

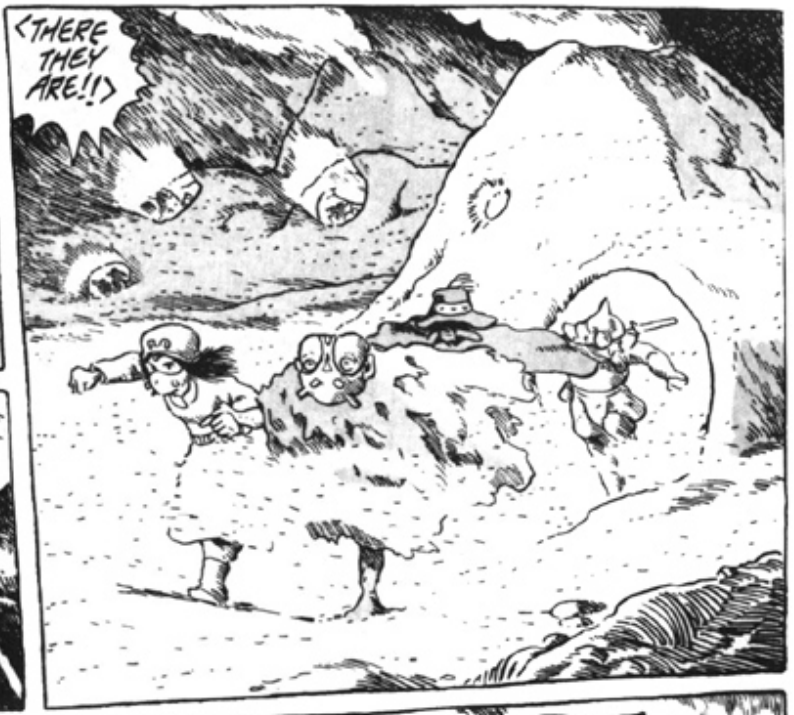
THIS WAY!

HURRY!!

PUT ON MASKS!
ACHUK
SLAM
WHY ARE YOU HELPING ME?!

BAM BAM BAM
SSS
WE NOT DO FOR YOU! I DON'T WANT!

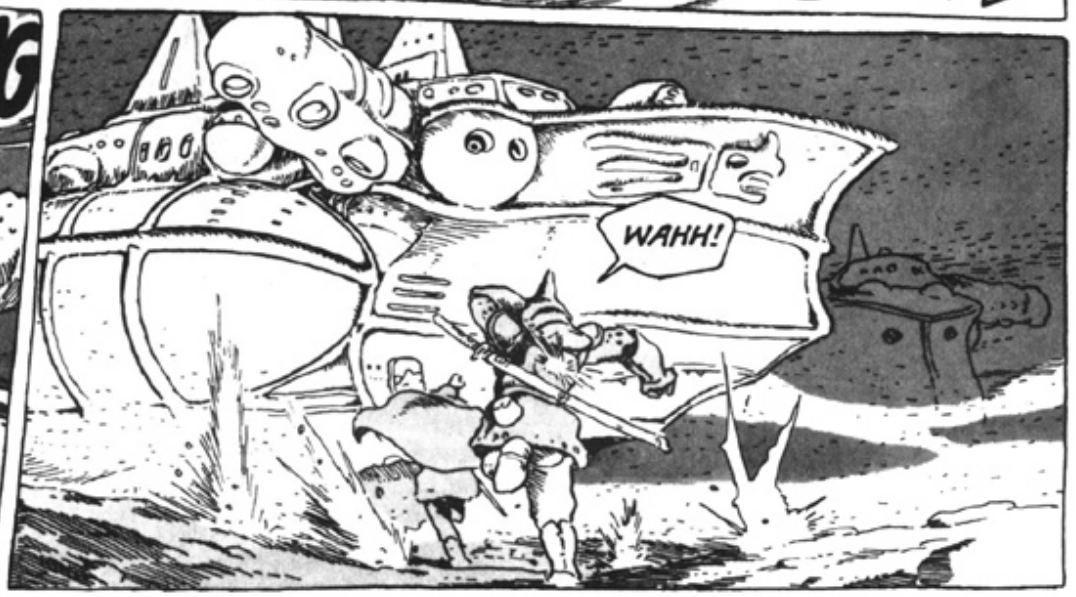
WE'D BEEN WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO DESTROY THAT TANK...
SSSSSS


<THERE THEY ARE!!>

<TALK LATER-- FOR NOW, RUN!>

WBAM
WBAM

SPANG
TIK


WAHH!

FASH!

<TRAPPED!>

<IT'S A BATTLESHIP FROM THE COUNCIL OF MONKS!>

SKRAKK

WHSSH

!!

<SURRENDER OR WE'LL BLOW YOU TO PIECES!!>
<THIS... THIS IS ALL A MISTAKE! WE WOULD NEVER DREAM OF COMMITTING TREASON!>

<THIS IS THE END FOR US... WE'LL ALL BE KILLED!>
<I TOLD YOU WE SHOULDN'T DO IT...>

WE'RE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED...

RMB RMB
RMB RMB RMB

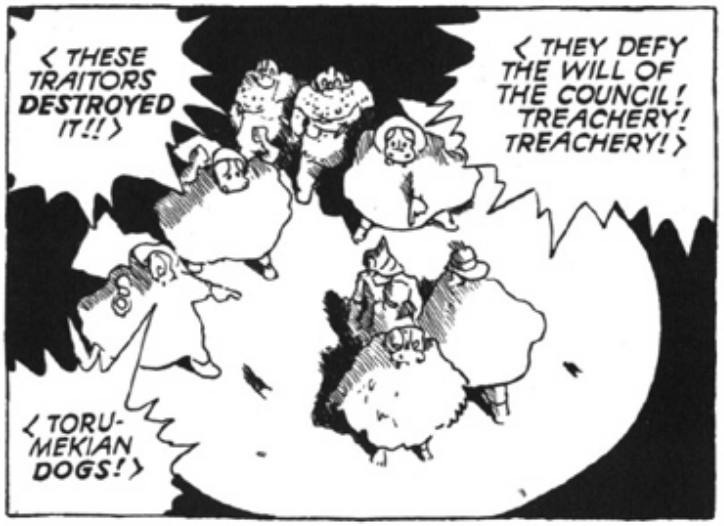
<SILENCE! KNOW YE THAT THIS IS THE BROTHER OF HIS AUGUST MAJESTY THE HOLY EMPEROR!>

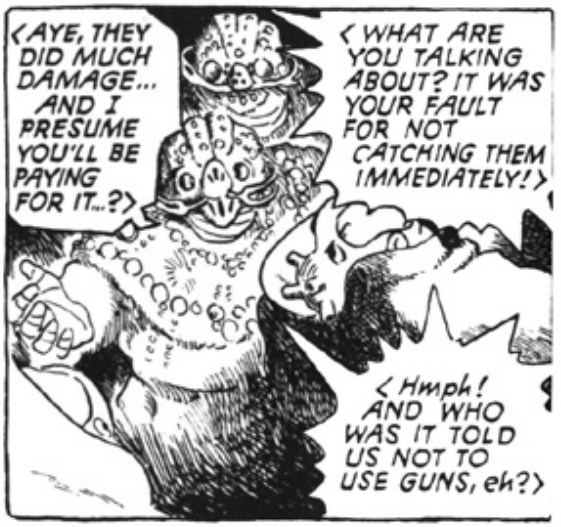
< I HAVE TRAVELLED FAR FROM THE SACRED CAPITAL TO THIS HEATHEN LAND, ONLY TO BE GREETED BY THIS!>
< THE SIGNALS SPOKE OF A MANI TRIBE UPRISING-- CAN THIS BE TRUE?>

< MY LORD! IT WAS I WHO SENT THOSE SIGNALS...>
< TRULY, YOU COULD NOT HAVE COME AT A BETTER TIME!>

< LET THIS BE A LESSON TO YOU! WE SAW THROUGH YOUR SCHEMES AND ALREADY TOOK ACTION!>

< MY LORD, WE BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS, BUT THE OHMU CULTURE TANK... >


< THESE TRAITORS DESTROYED IT!!>
< THEY DEFY THE WILL OF THE COUNCIL! TREACHERY! TREACHERY!>
< TORU-MEKIAN DOGS!>

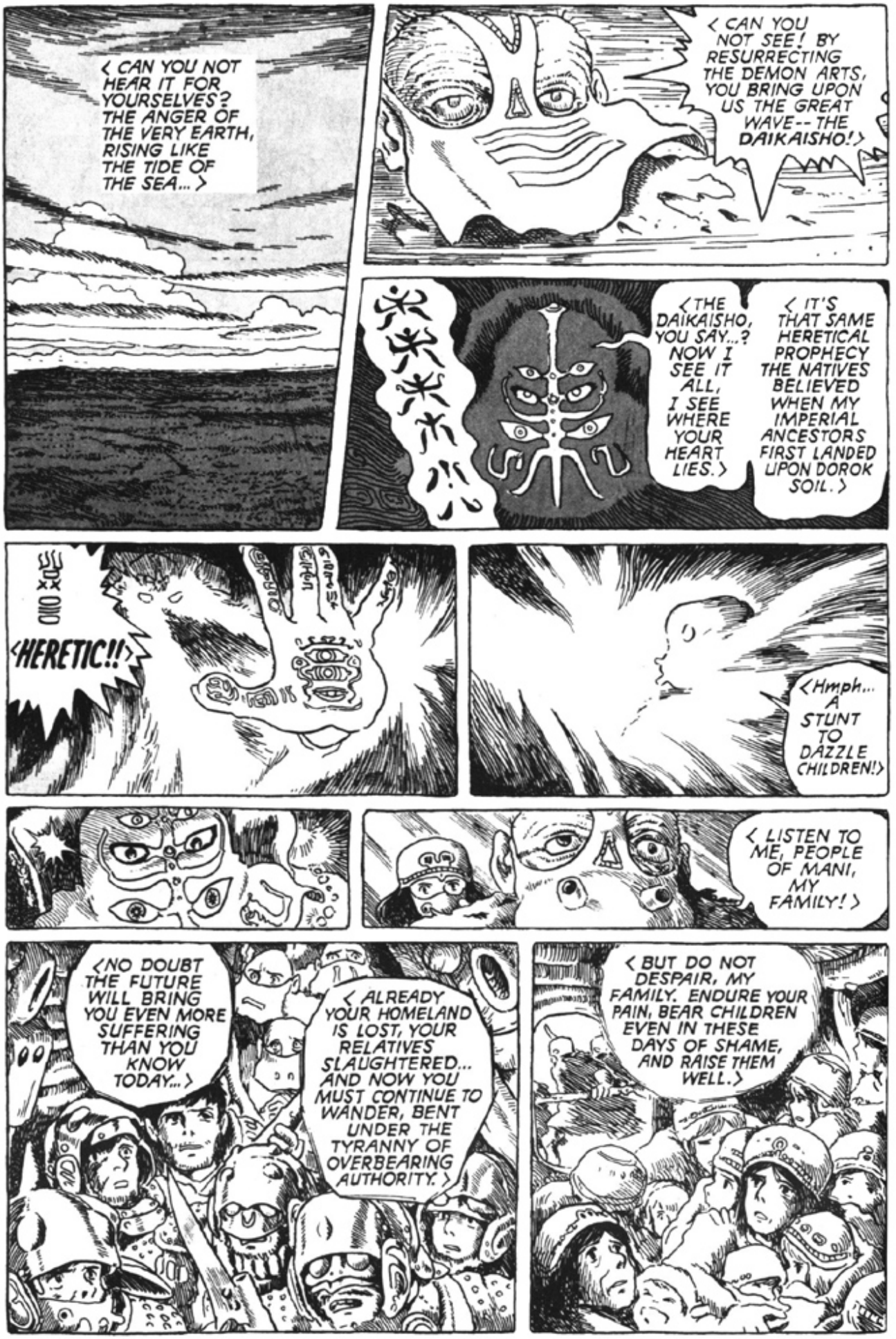

< AYE, THEY DID MUCH DAMAGE... AND I PRESUME YOU'LL BE PAYING FOR IT...?>
< WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IT WAS YOUR FAULT FOR NOT CATCHING THEM IMMEDIATELY!>
< Hmph! AND WHO WAS IT TOLD US NOT TO USE GUNS, eh?>

< USE-LESS MONEY-GRUBBING FOOLS!>
< PAY UP, YOU...!>
< MY LORD! WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH...>

< SHUT UP!>
< PAY US!>

EEK
AAA!

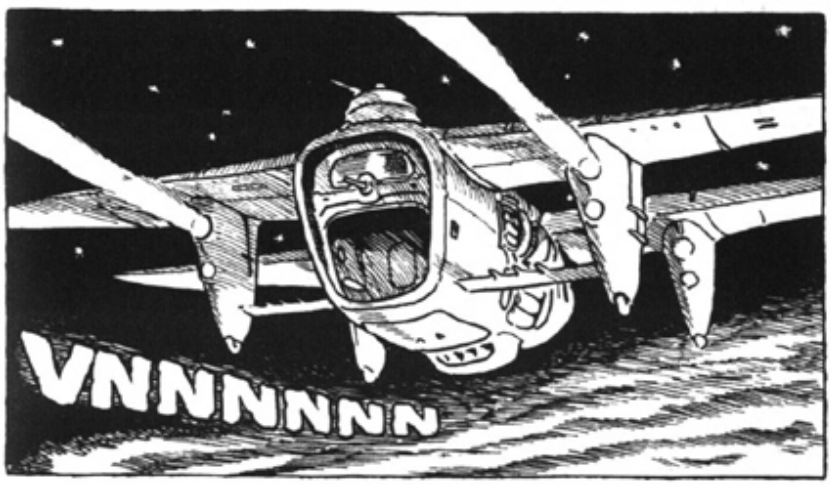
TELE-KINESIS!
MUST BE QUIET...
SILENCE YOUR THOUGHTS... HE CAN READ YOUR MIND...
<P-PLEASE... FORGIVE US...>
<THEY'RE SPEAKING THE SACRED TONGUE. CAN'T MAKE HEAD NOR TAIL OF IT...>
<HOW... HOW COULD THE HOLY ONE DO SUCH A THING! HE'LL BE PUT TO DEATH FOR RESISTING THE EMPEROR'S BROTHER!>
<STEADY NOW... LISTEN TO HIS WORDS.>
<HE'S SPEAKING TO YOUR HEARTS, EVEN AS HE CONFRONTS THE DARK ONE...>
<WHAT MADNESS IS THIS, TO WAGE WAR EVEN AS THE SPREAD OF THE SEA OF CORRUPTION DRIVES US TO THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION...?>
<SILENCE!>
<THE ARROGANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF MONKS, TAMPERING WITH THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE AND TURNING THEM TO WAR...>
<AND THE HUBRIS OF THE EMPEROR, SACRIFICING THE LOYALTY OF THE DOROK TRIBES FOR HIS OWN GREED AND SAFETY...>
<SILENCE! BE SILENT!!>


< CAN YOU NOT HEAR IT FOR YOURSELVES? THE ANGER OF THE VERY EARTH, RISING LIKE THE TIDE OF THE SEA... >
< CAN YOU NOT SEE! BY RESURRECTING THE DEMON ARTS, YOU BRING UPON US THE GREAT WAVE-- THE DAIKAISHO!>
< THE DAIKAISHO, YOU SAY...? NOW I SEE IT ALL, I SEE WHERE YOUR HEART LIES.>
< IT'S THAT SAME HERETICAL PROPHECY THE NATIVES BELIEVED WHEN MY IMPERIAL ANCESTORS FIRST LANDED UPON DOROK SOIL.>
<HERETIC!!>
<Hmph... A STUNT TO DAZZLE CHILDREN!>
< LISTEN TO ME, PEOPLE OF MANI, MY FAMILY!>
<NO DOUBT THE FUTURE WILL BRING YOU EVEN MORE SUFFERING THAN YOU KNOW TODAY...>
< ALREADY YOUR HOMELAND IS LOST, YOUR RELATIVES SLAUGHTERED... AND NOW YOU MUST CONTINUE TO WANDER, BENT UNDER THE TYRANNY OF OVERBEARING AUTHORITY. >
< BUT DO NOT DESPAIR, MY FAMILY. ENDURE YOUR PAIN, BEAR CHILDREN EVEN IN THESE DAYS OF SHAME, AND RAISE THEM WELL.>

VNNNNN
MM...?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, KAI?

KEE!
YOU'RE AWAKE, TOO, TETO? BOTH OF YOU SHOULD SETTLE DOWN...

LET ME SLEEP...


VNNNNNN

ALL'S WELL... eh?! Oh, IT'S YOU, IS IT?

IT'LL BE DAWN SOON...
VNNN

WHO IS IT? WHO'S CALLING ME...?

< THE ANCIENT PROPHECIES WERE TRUE... THERE HAS COME THE ADVENT OF THE ANGEL OF LIGHT, THE ONE WHO WILL LEAD YOU TO THE **PURE LAND.** SHE WHO LOVES THE FOREST, AND TALKS WITH THE INSECTS... SHE WHO CALLS DOWN THE WIND, AND RIDES UPON IT LIKE A BIRD.>

< THESE BLIND EYES OF MINE SEE HER NOW, IN VISION AS CLEAR AS DAY...>

< "And that one shall come to you garbed in raiment of blue, descending upon a field of gold...">

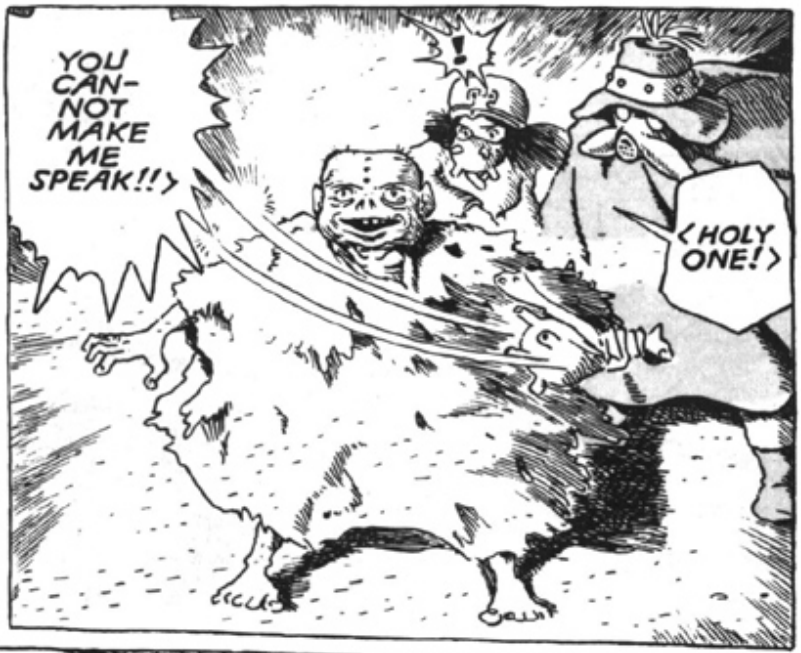
< "... to forge anew our ties with the lost land.>

...?!

< I SHALL NOT REVEAL THAT ONE'S NAME.>
< WHEN THE TIME IS NIGH, SHE WILL COME BEFORE YOU, AND YOU SHALL KNOW HER.>

HOLY ONE...?
"FARE-WELL"...? WHY?!

< SPEAK THE NAME! I WILL PUT THE TRUTH OF THIS HERESY TO THE TEST! >

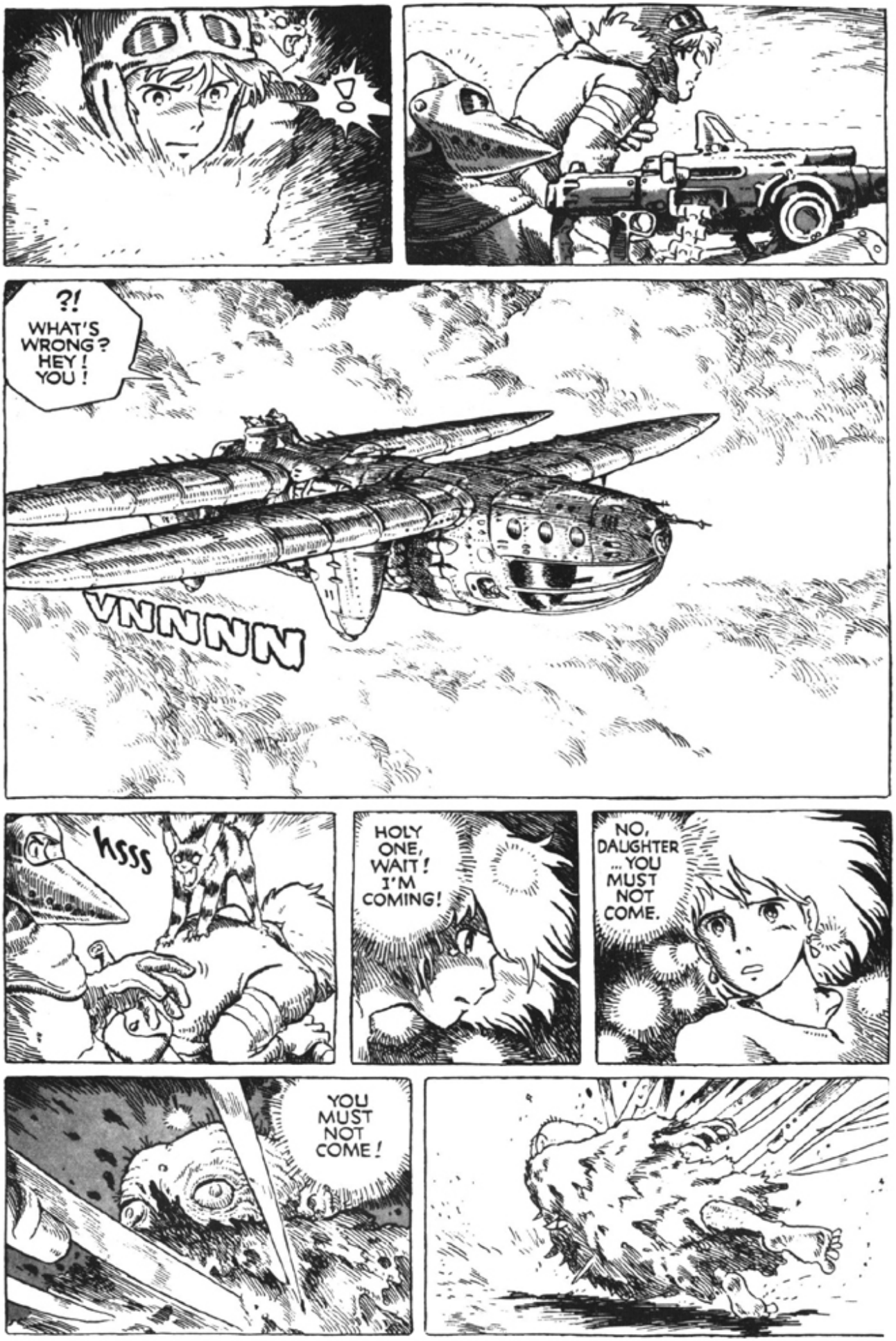

YOU CAN-NOT MAKE ME SPEAK!!>
!
<HOLY ONE!>

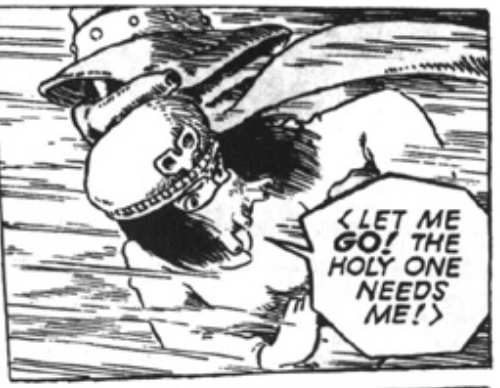
< AYE, AND THAT'S WHY I'LL NOT SAY IT.>
< NO DOUBT YOU WOULD HAVE HER TORTURED TO DEATH IN THE NAME OF THE INQUISI-TION.>

?!
!!

< FLEE, MY FRIENDS!>

< FARE-WELL!>
<HOLY ONE!!>

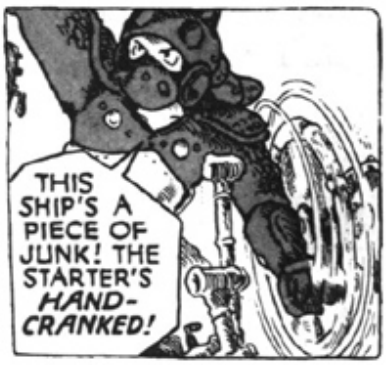

!
?!
WHAT'S WRONG? HEY! YOU!
VNNNN
hsss
HOLY ONE, WAIT! I'M COMING!
NO, DAUGHTER ... YOU MUST NOT COME.
YOU MUST NOT COME!

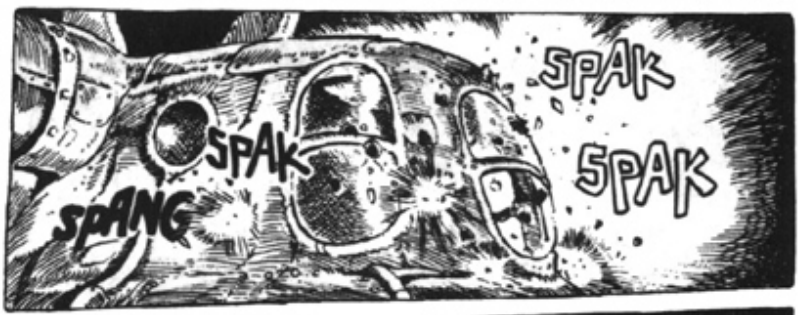

<LET ME GO! THE HOLY ONE NEEDS ME!>

<LET ME GO!!>
CAN YOU FLY HER?
PROBABLY!

YOU MUST BEAR IT... IT'S NOT TIME FOR YOU TO DIE!

AA!
KRAAK


THIS SHIP'S A PIECE OF JUNK! THE STARTER'S HAND-CRANKED!

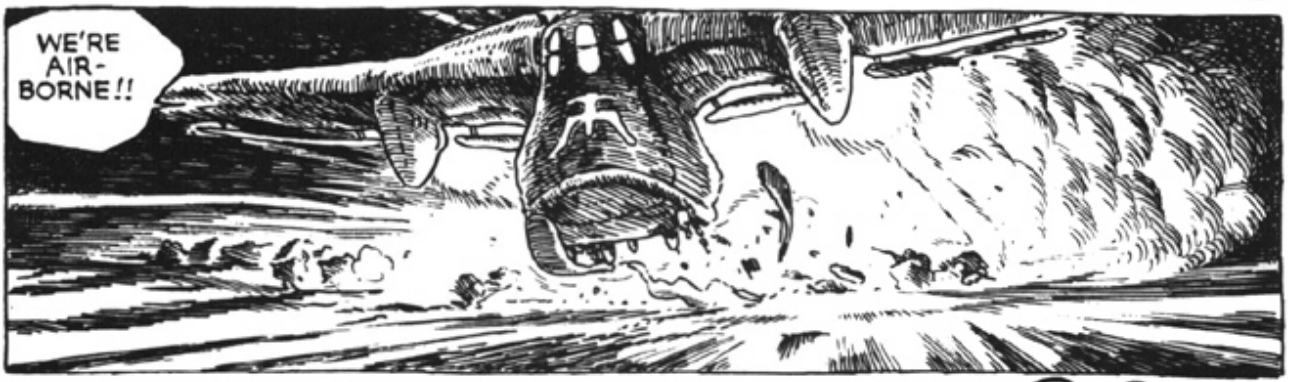

SPAK
SPAK
SPAK
SPANG

!!
KSHKSH

VREEEE

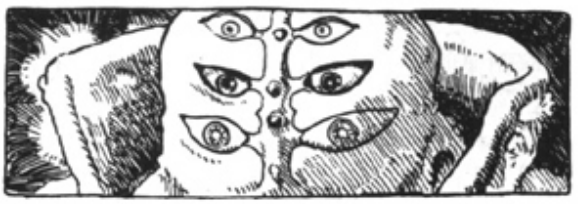
KGRNGRNNNNN
IT STARTED !!
GRNNGRNN
!!
SSSSSS
!
DAMN IT !
SSSSSS
SSSSSS

KOOM


WE'RE AIR-BORNE!!

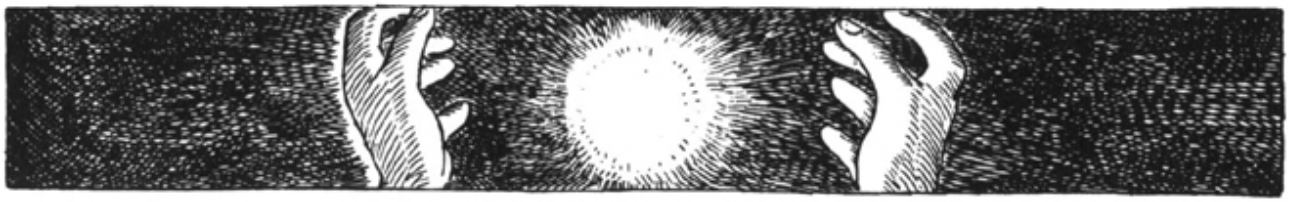
< THE FOOLS TOOK OFF-- WE'LL SOON SHOOT THEM DOWN. >

< FIRE AT WILL! >
BBOOM



.....
SHE IS HERE...
.....

THE BLUE-CLAD ONE HE SPOKE OF...



HOLY ONE...

Oh, NO... HE'S FADING AWAY...!

..... SO WARM... .....

!
SOMEBODY'S WATCHING ME...

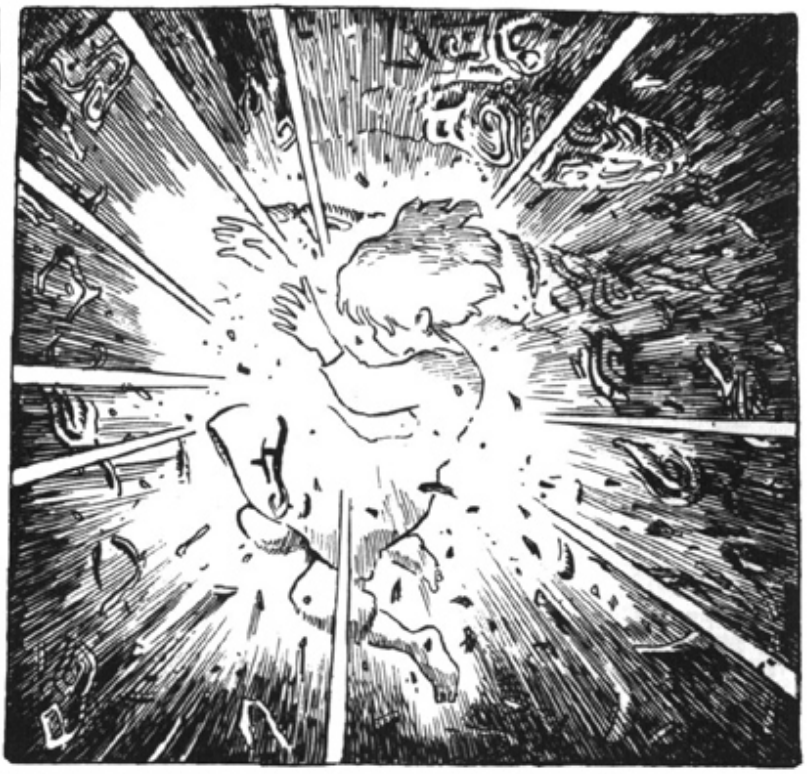
....
zhnnzhnn

COME...
ZHNNN

.....
COME... COME UNTO ME...

HE... HE IS EVIL... .....

ZHNNN

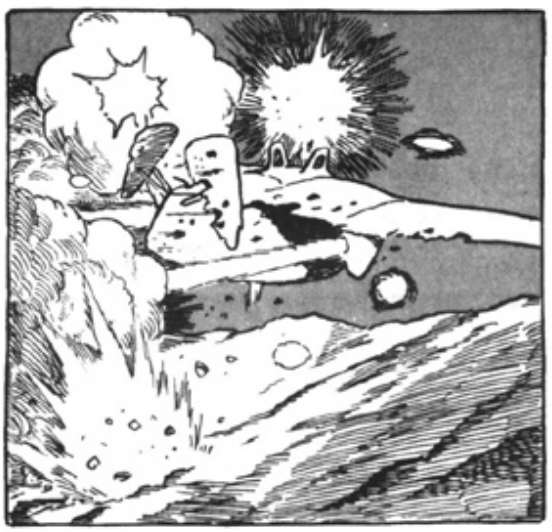


HNNG...!
<MY LORD!>

<WHAT IS THE MATTER?>
NGRR... SHE WAS WITHIN MY GRASP, AND I LET HER ESCAPE...!

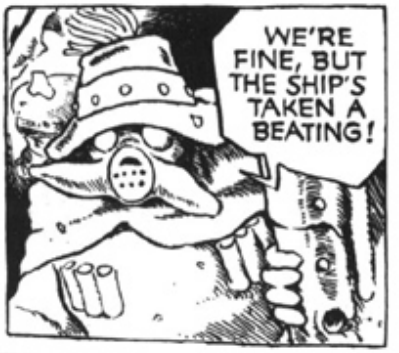
IT WAS HIM... *HIM!* HE INTERFERED WITH ME EVEN AS HIS SPIRIT FADED AWAY...!

BBOOM
BOOM

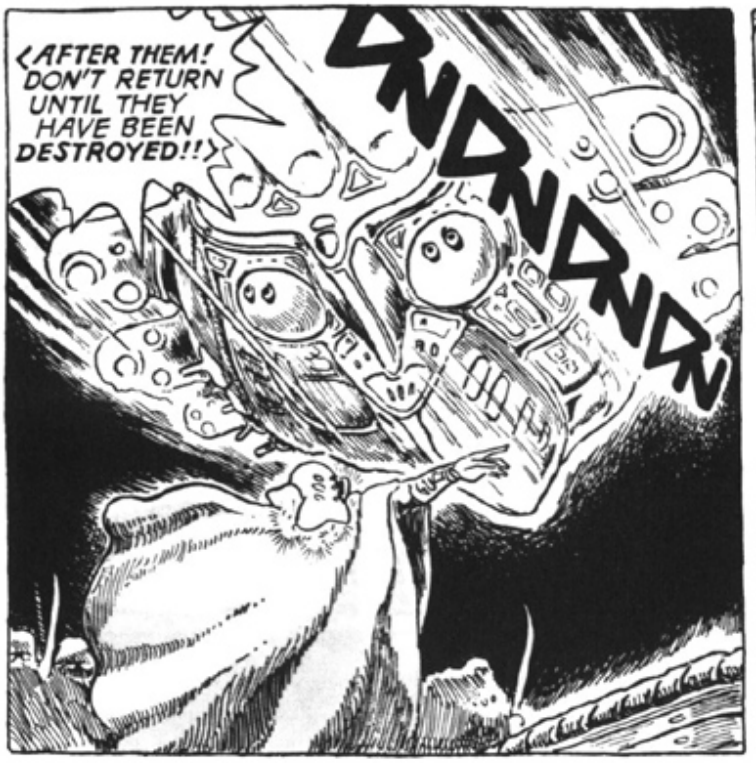


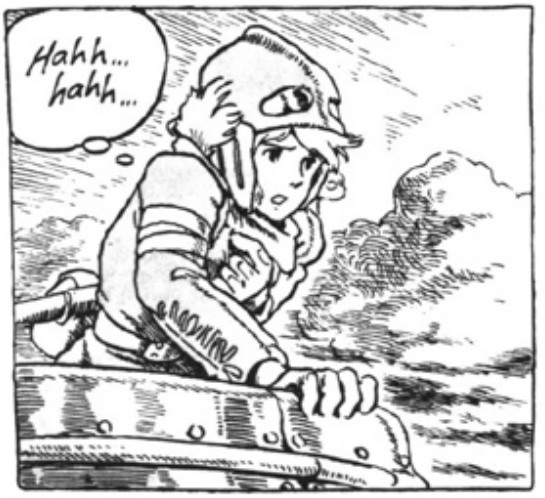
WE'VE CLEARED THE CRATER-- WE'RE OUT OF THEIR DIRECT LINE OF FIRE!

ARE YOU TWO ALL RIGHT?


WE'RE FINE, BUT THE SHIP'S TAKEN A BEATING!

WILL IT HOLD TO-GETHER LONG ENOUGH TO GET US TO KEHSEI CITY?
AS LONG AS WE DON'T PUT A STRAIN ON HER... THINK THEY'LL COME AFTER US?
GRRNNN
THEY CAN HARDLY LET US GET AWAY NOW...

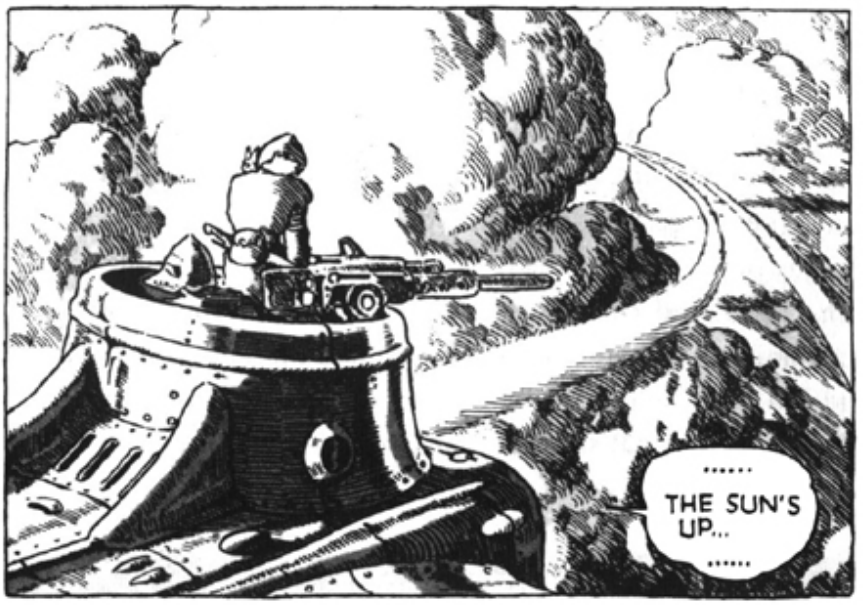

‹AFTER THEM! DON'T RETURN UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN DESTROYED!!›
DNDNDN


Hahh... hahh...

WHO... WHO COULD IT HAVE BEEN...? LIKE LIVING DARK-NESS...

‹ SHE MAY HAVE SLIPPED BETWEEN MY FINGERS, BUT I SAW HER FACE CLEARLY... SHE'S STILL BUT A WEAK YOUNG GIRL.›
‹NEXT TIME WE MEET, LITTLE GIRL, IT WILL NOT GO SO WELL FOR YOU...›

... I'VE BEEN BURNED...



ATTENTION ALL HANDS! ATTENTION ALL HANDS! WE ARE NOW ENTERING DOROK TERRITORY! MAINTAIN MAXIMUM ALERT!

TO BE CONTINUED...

HAYAO MIYAZAKI

Miyazaki was born in Tokyo in 1941. In 1963, after graduating from Gakushuin University, he joined the largest animation firm in Japan, Toei Doga. While working for Toei Doga and several other prominent animation studios, he helped create or directed many of the best animated TV series in Japan, including *Konan, the Boy of the Future*; *Lupin the Third*; and *The Girl of the Alps*. He also wrote, directed and designed the characters for the animation feature films *Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind* (1984), *Laputa Castle in the Sky* (1986), *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), and *Kiki's Delivery Service* (1989), all of which have been phenomenal successes in Japan. *My Neighbor Totoro* was released in English by Fox Video in 1994.

ON NAUSICAÄ

by Hayao Miyazaki

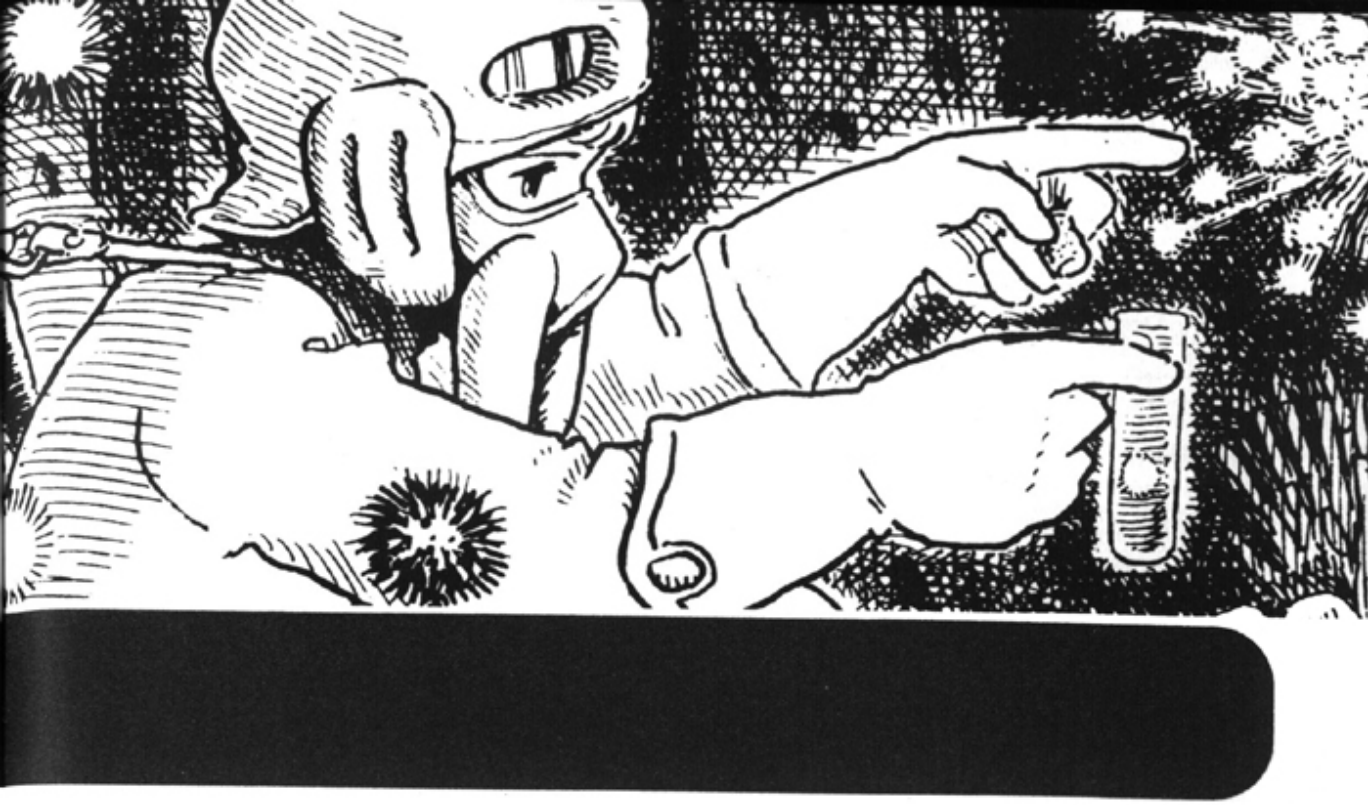
Nausicaä was a Phaeacian princess in *The Odyssey*. I have been fascinated by her ever since I first read about her in Bernard Evslin's Japanese translation of a small dictionary of Greek mythology. Later, when I actually read *The Odyssey*, I was disappointed not to find the same splendor in her there as I had found in Evslin's book. So, as far as I am concerned, Nausicaä is still the girl Evslin described at length in his paperback. I can tell that he was particularly fond of Nausicaä, as he devoted three pages to her in his small dictionary, but gave only one page to both Zeus and Achilles.

As Evslin described her, Nausicaä was a beautiful and fanciful girl, quick on her feet. She loved playing the harp and singing more than the attentions of her suitors or pursuing earthly comforts. She took delight in nature and had an especially sensitive personality. It was she who, unafraid, saved Odysseus and nursed his wounds when he drifted ashore covered with blood. Nausicaä soothed his spirit by improvising a song for him.

Nausicaä's parents worried that she might fall in love with Odysseus and pressured him to set sail. Nausicaä watched his ship until it was out of sight. According to legend, she never married, but traveled from court to court as the first female minstrel, singing about Odysseus and his adventures on his voyage.

Evslin concludes, "This girl occupied a special place in the weather-beaten heart of the great voyager Odysseus."

Nausicaä reminded me of a Japanese heroine—I think I read about her in *The Tales of the Past and Present*. She was the daughter of an aristocratic family and was called the "princess that loved insects." She was regarded as an eccentric because even after reaching a marriageable age, she still loved to play in the fields and would be enchanted by the transformation of a pupa into a butterfly. Her eyebrows were dark and her teeth white—unlike the other girls of her era, she did not follow the custom of shaving off her eyebrows and blackening her teeth. According to the *Tales*, she looked



very strange!

Today she wouldn't be perceived as an eccentric. Even though she might be considered a little peculiar, she would be able to fit into society easily, accepted as a nature lover, or just as someone with individualistic interests. In the era of *The Tale of Genji* and *The Pillow Book* [early eleventh century], however, an aristocrat's daughter who loved insects and would not shave her eyebrows would have been shunned. Even as a child, I couldn't help but worry about the princess's fate.

This princess was not daunted by social restrictions; she ran about as she pleased in the mountains and fields, moved by the plants and trees and the floating clouds...I've always wondered how the princess survived as an adult. Today she would be able to find someone who could understand and love her. What was her fate then, in the Heian period [794-1185], with all its conventions and taboos?

Unfortunately, unlike Nausicaä, the "princess that loved insects" never had an Odysseus wash up on her shores, nor songs to sing, nor foreign lands to wander in, to escape society's restrictions. If she had met the great voyager, however, I'm sure she would have experienced the same illumination from "the man covered with blood."

Unconsciously, Nausicaä and this Japanese princess became one person in my mind.

The people at *Animage* [a premiere Japanese animation magazine] encouraged me to do comics, so I went ahead and set down my own concept of Nausicaä. Now I am "doomed" and have to learn the hard way again why, a long time ago, I concluded that I had no talent for comics and gave them up [Miyazaki is being overly modest here]. Now I just want this girl to attain freedom and happiness.

This article appeared in volume one of the original Japanese version of Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind.